

THE
HISTORY
OF
CORNELIA. K



D U B L I N:

Printed for JOHN SMITH on the *Blind-Quay*.

M. DCC. L.

HISTORY

OF

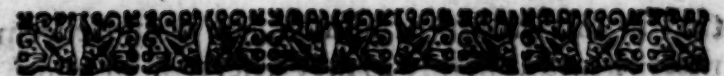
GOVERNMENT



DUBLIN

Printed by JOHN SMITH & SONS

LONDON



THE
HISTORY
OF
CORNELIA.

CORNELIA was born of one of the most distinguished families in France. Her parents had been long married without having had a child; they lived in that constant yet varying bliss to be found only in the enjoyment of the most delicate affection, and most perfect mutual esteem and confidence. But as neither could, with tranquility, think that the other wanted any thing to complete the most perfect happiness that human nature can enjoy, so both received inexpressible satisfaction, when appearances seemed to promise that this blessing would be added to those they already possessed. The lady flattered herself with the hopes of bringing into the world, a copy of the virtues of her husband's mind, and of the graces of his person; and that her beloved lord would feel all the pleasures of a father, in a son that would perform all filial duties, not from constraint but love; and

that in this image of himself, he would esteem those virtues as highly as they deserved, of which, while he was the only possessor, humility made him think meanly. Her fond fancy represented this son, making some woman as happy as she herself was made by his father; and like him also, making all that depended on him through love, or by menial ties, as easy as humanity, benevolence, generosity, and affection, could make them. Her lord gave no less scope to his imagination. He fancied he saw the child whose birth they longed for, adorned with all the virtues which, by female delicacy and sweetness, were made so amiable in the object of his tenderest love; and graced with beauties corresponding too well to the lovely mind within, to be robbed of their charms by age, or diminished in their value by possession. Thus each rejoiced in imaginary pleasures, little knowing the fatal consequences that were to attend the expected blessing. That which appeared an additional tie, dissolved their union, and his happiness was destroyed by that which promised its increase: for at the time Cornelia entered the world her mother left it.

It would be impossible to describe Mons. de ***'s grief. Though nature, his own disposition, and what was still more, the relation and resemblance the infant bore to the object of his constant love, disposed him to all the excess of paternal tenderness; yet he constantly found how unequal this affection was to that which he had felt for his soul's companion; for whom reason had been the foundation of a love which had indeed risen to all the heights of passion, without having been mixed with any of its faults.

He

He had formerly chosen a retired life to preserve his happiness unintruded upon, unwilling to have his thoughts taken off from the contemplation of truth, and the enjoyment of domestic pleasure. Grief, though an opposite cause, had the same effect, but in a greater degree. From retired, he became recluse, courting solitude, to avoid all interruption of the melancholy disposition of his mind, which made him incapable of amusement. He was persuaded that the world could now have no real pleasures in store for him. His portion of happiness, though short, had been far beyond what falls to the share of the greatest part of mankind. But his blessings were now all changed into misfortunes. The birth of his child, had deprived him of the best and most amiable of wives. The felicity he had enjoyed with her, was succeeded by endless regret; and the strength of his constitution was become an evil, as it prolonged his being; and by retarding the progress of undermining grief, reduced him to endure for many years an affliction which no time could abate.

His misery however did not make him neglectful of his Cornelia: he was too just to disregard the innocent, though the cause of his unhappiness. His retirement afforded him much leisure, and he employed it for her improvement, which became his whole study. His amusement was reading with her, explaining what she read, and teaching her music, of which he was a perfect master. All his joy was to observe her progress, and the charming resemblance she bore to her mother. By his extraordinary care, the quickness of her understanding, and her unwearied application, she had arrived at a thorough

rough knowledge of religion and morality, a great insight into history, natural philosophy, and several of the sciences, and to very great skill in music and other external accomplishments, before she had the misfortune to lose the best of fathers. He, at length, consumed by grief, left the world with joy, trusting in his daughter's sense and prudence, for the regulation of her conduct; and depending on the assistance of his brother Octavio, to whose care, on his death-bed, he had bequeathed her, as to one whom he had had the satisfaction of seeing extremely fond of his Cornelia, and greatly beloved and respected by her.

She was now arrived at the age of sixteen, and was endowed with all the charms of youth and beauty, accompanied with the most amiable vivacity. Her situation was in some measure dangerous. For though the great fund of reason and virtue with which she was blessed, would certainly preserve her from doing any thing essentially wrong; yet the little knowledge she had of the world, might expose her to censure, by making her neglect several things consecrated by customs and prejudices, of which she was ignorant. Her father's whole care had been to cultivate her understanding and virtue; and he had left her as ignorant of the manners of the world, as she was of her own family. There was scarce a good Author among the Greeks, Romans, or moderns, with whom she was not acquainted; but she knew not her relation to any one, but her uncle, who was almost the only person, besides her father, with whom she had ever conversed, excepting the poor, whom the charitable-

charitableness of her disposition had introduced to her observation.

Octavio endeavoured to prevail on her to quit her retirement and accompany him to court, where her age and beauty seemed to call her. But the affliction she was under, the consciousness of her ignorance of the customs of the world, her diffidence of herself, the love she had for reading, and above all the uses to which she had destined her fortune, made her resist the persuasions of her beloved uncle. He was too fond of her, to refuse himself the pleasure of staying some time with her, and to try to alleviate her grief by his constant attention and tenderness. But at length he was obliged to return to court, the king, whose chief favourite he was, growing impatient at his absence.

Cornelia at first found all the pains of solitude which she had never before felt, having always enjoyed the company of those that were dearest to her. But as she had in herself and in her amusements a continual resource, she soon bore it as well as her tender and affectionate heart would permit, after the loss of so excellent a father. Octavio had put her into the immediate possession of her whole fortune, which enabled her to increase those charities that had before, with the indulgence and approbation of her father, been her greatest pleasure. She denied herself all superfluous expences, looking upon them as bad, tho' common means of defrauding the poor; she considered, with compassion, the disproportion in fortune between the low and great, and tho' she saw the necessity of subordination, yet she grieved to see it so often accompanied by extreme poverty. She thought those who were

prevented by the gratification of their vanity, from lessening that inequality, by a communication of their wealth, little less criminal than those who were with-held by hard-heartedness and avarice. Desirous of removing such evils as came within her power to redress, she employed almost all her fortune in assisting the poor, tho' with such judgment and œconomy, that she gave no encouragement to idleness. Being convinced that virtue was not to be found with the slothful, industry was not less necessary than poverty, to intitle the healthy to her benevolence. By being sparing in her expences upon herself, she had sufficient to relieve all the necessitous that came within her knowledge. She gave ease and content to the old, attendance and competence to the sick, encouragement and all useful assistance to the young, and by this was made as much happier than those who were the objects of her charity, as the pleasures, arising from the riches of the mind, excel those resulting from pecuniary possessions.

Octavio by frequent visits enlivened her solitude, and by the kindest behaviour endeavoured to endear himself to her, and to make every thing else more agreeable, by the satisfactory assurance of being possessed of a sincere and tender friend, whose advice might conduct her safely thro' a world, where every step was dangerous to one so artless and innocent. But this happiness did not last above a year. Octavio had conceived an early passion for her, even when she seemed too young to inspire any. Little used to controul his inclinations, he neither weighed their justice nor consequences; but only considered the way to succeed in them: what he
gained

gained by assisting the vices of his master, he spent in the gratification of his own. By this he created less surprize than envy; the unworthy way in which he lavished his wealth, was too consistent with the base manner in which he obtained it, to cause wonder in any; for as virtue will never permit a man to be either rapacious or a sycophant, what is got by such means can never be spent in its cause. Tho' all blamed the favourite, many wished to imitate him; but he was too artful, and of too much use to the king's vices to lose his favour, as well as too vigilant in the pursuit of his own pleasures, to neglect any of his advantages. He had made frequent visits to his brother, from the first moment he found himself enamoured of his daughter. That good man, living too retired to hear any of the just censures cast upon Octavio, did not doubt of his being as nearly allied to him in merit as in blood. The trust reposed in Octavio by his brother, when he lay on his death-bed, greatly raised the hopes of that wicked man. These being founded only on Cornelia's innocence, could be but small while she was under the care of one, so able to instruct her in what was to be feared, from the vices which the purity of her own heart make her incapable of suspecting in another's. His first care was to gain her esteem and affection, by the strongest proofs he could give of his own, under such restrictions as could not raise the least suspicion in her. He succeeded so well in this, that no one had ever a more tender friendship for another, than Cornelia had for Octavio. She felt for him all the sentiments that arise in the best of hearts, had the highest opinion of his merit, and an absolute reliance on him.

But these were not all the sentiments he wished to raise. A woman of sense and virtue, however great her ignorance or innocence may be, will always know how to repel vice as soon as she perceives it; she is only slower in suspecting it than those, who being conscious of it in their own hearts, are therefore the more ready to believe it in others. Octavio had often expressed his love for her, in terms more warm than she thought necessary or natural between one friend and another; but she for a long time attributed this to his having, in general, a more strong and eager manner of expressing himself than she had. His excessive praises of her person and understanding, she imagined to proceed from nothing more blamable than partiality; a fault, indeed, but one of which she had no right to complain; and, to say the truth, malice would have acquitted him of the imputation of flattery, tho' her modesty would not, as no commendation could exceed her merit.

Octavio finding that calm reason accompanied her affection towards him, as well as all her actions, determined to try every method of bringing her into a disposition fitter to bear his love. Among other things, he tried to soften her by such books as were fittest for the purpose; and accordingly gave her plays, romances, and poetry; a sort of reading she had not been used to. Her father, unwilling to cultivate a tenderness of heart that was born with her, and which he had found in himself, attended with such cutting pangs, had never let her soften her mind with such studies. Content with the virtue founded on reason, true religion, and benevolence, he did not wish she should learn the boasted sentiments of

of poetry and romance. The chief aim of her uncle's conversation, whenever he could find an opportunity, was, to instill into her mind a belief, that neither reason, nor religion, made nearness of kindred an objection to any sort of alliance, but that all those laws had been made out of political views.

One day he found her in tears for the imaginary distresses of some person in one of the books he had given her. He thought he could not find a more favourable time to declare his passion, flattering himself that she, who could weep for the supposed misfortunes of one who subsisted only in a writer's imagination, would be unwilling to make him unhappy for whom she had the sincerest friendship; little considering that those who have the most compassion for virtuous love, may have the least pity for a vicious passion. He persuaded her to take a walk with him. He soon turned the conversation to the favourite subject, and trying, as he called it, to reason her out of her prejudices, used as his chief argument, that if an union with those nearest to us in blood was unnatural, we could love no one within those degrees, as the affections are the gifts of nature. As she was beginning to shew him, that he confounded depraved nature with the more perfect, and that he might by the same argument maintain every vice, and every crime that is any where committed, to be right; his passion, inflamed beyond bounds, by the long constraint he had kept it under, deprived him of all his caution and dissimulation, and he stopped her reply, by crying out, it was blasphemy to suppose it a crime for him to love his Cornelia; could the nearness of blood make him less sensible of her charms, or make it
wrong

wrong in him to doat on her to distraction, who alone deserved such excess of passion? He would not live but for hopes of, one day, seeing her soul united to his in real ties, and not only by those imaginary bonds with which priests shackle the vulgar.

Fear and astonishment rendered her immovable. He then caught hold of one of her hands; swore nothing was dear to him in life but her; reminded her of the affection he had always born her; of all his care and tenderness; and in return he only begged, if she would preserve him from immediate death, that she would permit him, at least, to talk of love, to tell her how long, how constant, how ardent his passion had been, and to pity, if not reward it; that he asked no more, and would pay obedience to the strictest rules her cruelty could impose, provided she would not banish him her presence, or forbid him to speak of the only subject of his thoughts: unless she granted this, he vowed he would never rise from the earth, but end there a life, which, without that permission, would be insupportable to him. If impatience for her answer had not stopped him, he might have talked much longer, before she recovered herself enough to answer him; she could scarcely believe her senses did not deceive her. It appeared incredible that an uncle could talk in this manner to a niece; tho' he had often of late kissed her hands, and pressed her in his arms, which actions, tho' accompanied with expressions of fatherly fondness, had surprized her, and made her alter her behaviour from that easy freedom so natural to the unsuspecting. As soon as she was able to speak, she begged him not to cancel, by such discourses, the obligations she had

had to him ; she told him, that if what he said was truth, he ought to avoid all opportunities of seeing her, till he could do it innocently ; that she could never more bear the sight of him, if he let the least signs of so criminal a passion appear ; as great as her affection had been for him, it should never serve as a foundation to build a crime upon ; that friendship sprung from virtue, and could never give rise to any thoughts that were not virtuous ; that the love must be of a very worthless sort, which could lead a person to attempt to injure the object of it ; that the regard which was not placed on her virtues she must despise ; and if his arose from them, was it possible he should wish to put an end to their existence ? That if base selfish views were the cause of his fondness, she should be very unhappy ; but never so much so, as when he insulted her by expressions of a detestable passion. She entreated him to return instantly to court, and never see her again, who would think herself in some degree criminal, by having inspired him with any thoughts that were so : she insisted on his letting go her hands, and on his not accompanying her ; but leaving her the liberty of endeavouring to compose the anxiety of her mind, before she was seen by her family.

Octavio found by her manner, as well as by her words, that he had little reason to hope another interview, and therefore resolved not to let this end so soon ; but to try all his power to make her reverse her sentence. He wept, he begged, he entreated, and used all the arts in which long practice had made him skilful ; till finding that nothing but his superior strength kept her with him, and that indignation at his repeated

repeated addresses took the place of grief in her mind; his passion was heightened by the repulse, he ceased from all soft endeavours to move her, and attempted by force to make her sit down on the grass with him. But chance bringing some of the neighbouring labourers that way, she took this opportunity of getting free from him. She called them to her, on pretence of enquiring after one of their relations who was under her care; and directing her steps homewards, led them on by her questions till she was within sight of her own house.

Her constitution was not strong enough, to bear unhurt the perturbation her spirits had been in; she was immediately taken extremely ill, and continued so for some days; tho' she received a little ease of mind from hearing that her uncle went away the day after this unhappy adventure. The excessive grief she felt at finding one whom she loved and esteemed so tenderly deserved nothing from her but hatred and scorn, had too much effect on her health to admit of a speedy recovery; yet her youth and natural strength prevailed, and in a little more than a week her uneasiness began to abate.

This remission was of short duration; the first night she had got into a quiet sleep, she was awakened by a great noise of horsemen riding into the court. She gave the alarm to her servants, and making them charge what fire-arms were in the house, bid them make the best defence they could. By a bell they communicated the alarm to the neighbours, who were too strongly attached to one who contributed so much to preserve their lives in peace and plenty, not to repair immediately to her defence. Part of them had

no sooner entered the house, than it was invested, and threatened to be attack'd, if admittance was not grante them directly. As this was refused, they beganto try to break open the door, but they receivedso many shot from the windows, as made them fear they should find men able to defend themselves, and to obstruct their entrance when they came to fight nearer. This for some time abated the vigor of the attack. Cornelia ordered one of her servants to ask, if want of money tempted them to come there ; if so, they should have all she had in the house, for she could not think any sum worth venturing the life of one man. But the fear which had at first risen in her mind was confir med by the answer she received, that they wanted admittance and not money; and promised they would do harm to no one if they would but permit them to take shelter there that night.

She was soon put out of all doubt as to the person who had sent them, and as to their intention, by the discovery of Octavio's favourite servant by his voice, which was very particular, and was heard and observed by many. This made her more than ever sensible of the danger she was in ; she found herself exposed almost inevitably to every thing she could fear : her ammunition was nearly spent, and she could not hope that her people would be long able to defend her from the force of men so much better armed ; and their guide and commander was too well acquainted with all parts of the house, to leave her any possibility of concealing herself in it. Death appeared in her present situation so small an evil, that her greatest wish was thereby to be preserved from falling into the hands of a man she dreaded much

much more. She made one of her men lend her his cloaths, and dressing herself in them, went to the door that was most strongly attacked, hoping either to be killed at their entrance, or by her disguise to escape their search. She had been there but a little time before the door was broke down; they rushed in immediately, without depriving her of life, or having left the outside of the house so unguarded as to give her the power to make her escape. Her terror was now compleat; she began then to fear that not finding her, they would suspect some disguise, and, by a narrow examination of all the persons in the house, discover her.

But providence, watchful over the innocent, saved her in the midst of her despair; before the ruffians had searched all the house for her, such of the neighbours as could not get in before it was beset, having gone to a gentleman's who lived not far off, increased their numbers by his servants, and by some others in his neighbourhood; and having got a good number of arms they returned to try what they could do towards Cornelia's assistance. They soon made their way thro' those who were left to guard the outside of the house, and entering it followed the ruffians up stairs, where they fell upon them, and would have made great slaughter among them, had not Cornelia, who joined this little army, restrained their just fury. However, in spite of her endeavours, many were wounded, tho' none were killed on the spot. The banditti being forced to submit, and beg for quarter, it was readily granted them, with leave to go unmolested out of the house, on condition, they left the country as expeditiously as possible.

None

None of Cornelia's defenders had received wounds of any consequence ; to do them harm was not the design of those that had attacked them. She rewarded them greatly for their faithful assistance, and kept a number of them in the house to defend her, in case any new occasion offered, before she had found out some more secure way of avoiding the dangers that threatened her.

She was in the utmost perplexity what course to take ; her uncle was so great a favourite at court, that if he chose to make use of his master's power, he might take such measures, as must at once put an end to all her hopes of being defended from him. Her attendants were full of astonishment ; they found the design was to carry her off, but why, or to whom, they could not guess, nor how her uncle's servant came to be concerned in such a piece of villainy. For Octavio had given such good and kind reasons for not taking leave of her before he left her house, as prevented all suspicion of their not continuing on the same friendly and affectionate terms as they had always been.

Cornelia was sensible she could find no safety at home ; and yet where could she fly ? But the necessity of the case made her determine, at all events, to leave her own house, as the most unsafe place in which she could possibly be. She saw a thousand difficulties and distresses before her, but none that could incline her to hazard her innocence, where it might become a prey to the base views of so wicked a man. She resolved to let no one share a fate which threatened so many sufferings, unless she had better reasons to

to believe she should be at some time able to reward them.

Having fixed this resolution, she shut herself into her chamber, and began to prepare for her departure. Her first employment was to divide her money; great part of it she sealed up directed to the person, who of all her family she could best trust with an order how to dispose of it among the poor; desirous to leave them all she could possibly spare, that they might be the longer before they suffered by her absence, in case her uncle would not comply with the request she intended to make him. She then wrote him the following letter.

‘ **W**HEN this letter reaches you, I hope I shall be out of your power. The shocking attempt that was made to seize me in my own house, and which was too plainly by your orders, shews me the danger I am in while I am here, in too clear a light not to oblige me to remove my abode. Where I am going I know not, what will become of me, I am still less able to guess. I shall take none of my servants with me, because I will not make any one a sharer in the difficulties, the poverty, and the other misfortunes that may attend me. I shall acquaint none of them with my departure; because I would not subject them to your resentment, nor myself to any evil consequences by their fears of you; or by their treachery, if any of them should be capable of so bad an action as discovering me. If such a suspicion be unjust, I hope I shall be excused it, on account of the disappointment I have lately had where I had fixed my best opinion. If you have

‘ have the least degree of true affection for me,
‘ or any softness towards me that may give me
‘ the power of moving you to compassion, you
‘ must feel some compunction when you consider
‘ to what you have reduced me. Young, un-
‘ used to the world, never exposed to any hard-
‘ ships, I am now forced to encounter all the
‘ difficulties that attend poverty, perhaps indi-
‘ gence, in those who have been bred up in ease
‘ and plenty. Obligated to leave the only place I
‘ ever inhabited, where I have spent sixteen years
‘ in all the happiness that a contented temper,
‘ the love of a country life, the power of grati-
‘ fying my own disposition, and the kindest in-
‘ dulgence from the best of parents could afford
‘ me; obliged, I say, to fly from this place by
‘ the person who was bound, by the strongest ties,
‘ to defend me in the possession of every thing I
‘ had a right to! But for this I deserve little pity,
‘ in comparison to what is due for the inex-
‘ pressible grief I feel, at finding myself so mis-
‘ taken in a man whom I looked upon as my
‘ parent, my friend, my instructor, my guide,
‘ my companion, and whom I loved with an
‘ affection equal to every one of these ties. How
‘ it grieves my heart to find it has misplaced so
‘ much affection; and that one, whom I thought
‘ possessed of every virtue, is so entirely devoid
‘ of any, no one can know, but those who
‘ have a heart as tender as mine, and have
‘ suffered an equal disappointment. But in-
‘ nocence is a comforter, that will in time get
‘ the better of my uneasiness, and make me
‘ indifferent to such as are unworthy of my re-
‘ gard. Perhaps they would be happy if they
‘ had any consolation within their own breasts;
but

‘ but conscience is their accuser, and there is
‘ none so severe. I forget myself; my design
‘ in beginning, was neither to reproach you, nor
‘ to move your pity; it was only to beg that if
‘ you have any regard for me, you would not
‘ let others suffer with me. Let not the poor be
‘ impoverished by my misfortunes; the greatest
‘ part of my estate has hitherto been spent in
‘ relieving them, and if you will still let it be
‘ employed the same way, I can in my heart
‘ forgive you the misery you have brought upon
‘ me. You will find I have maintained a little
‘ set of old men and women, of whom I required
‘ that they should teach all the children in the
‘ neighbourhood to read, write, work, and every
‘ thing of that sort that was then, or might one
‘ day become useful to them, that by their knit-
‘ ting and spinning, they should supply them-
‘ selves and most of the poor whom I cloathed,
‘ with all things that could be so provided them,
‘ and that they should take care of such children
‘ as I committed to them. I would beg that to
‘ these, their former allowance (of which the
‘ enclosed account of my past expences will
‘ inform you) may still be continued; and the
‘ places of such as die filled by others whose
‘ age, infirmities, and poverty intitle them to it.
‘ I must likewise wish that the yearly income I
‘ had set apart for the support of orphans, or
‘ poor children, whose parents would part with
‘ them for a convenient sum, may still be em-
‘ ployed in a constant succession of them, and
‘ that till they are old enough to be put to ser-
‘ vice, or apprenticed, as convenience or their
‘ genius makes proper, they may still be put
‘ under the care of the aforesaid old women,
‘ divided

‘ divided equally among them as far as their
‘ healths will permit ; because emulation makes
‘ them the more careful of those who are
‘ particularly their charge. Nothing ever gave
‘ me more pleasure than this last article of my
‘ expences, as I thought that instead of a nuisance
‘ I should make them of use to society, and that
‘ I was as serviceable to their minds as to their
‘ bodies, which, by the way of life they would
‘ have been bred to, would both have been in
‘ great danger of becoming curses to them :
‘ especially their minds, for they could not fail
‘ of being corrupted, and as they begin to be so,
‘ very young, I never took any that were above
‘ five years old. It was my custom to send to
‘ every poor woman who lay in, every thing
‘ that could be of any comfort, ease or assistance
‘ to her and her new born child. I took upon
‘ me the provision of every seventh child that
‘ any poor person had, and paid the parents for
‘ that care of it, at the same price I must have
‘ done any other nurse, and cloathed all if they
‘ had more than that number, which indeed I
‘ also did for many others that were poor. For
‘ all that were sick I provided nurses and other
‘ necessaries, and to every couple, when they
‘ first married, I gave furniture for their houses,
‘ and stocked them, as well as many who had
‘ been long married, with such cattle and poul-
‘ try, as might be a means of enabling them to
‘ maintain their families more comfortably. The
‘ few young girls whom I employed in the house,
‘ in embroidery and other kinds of work, are
‘ arrived at such perfection, that it will be your
‘ interest to take care of them till they can be well
‘ provided for in service or otherwise. These
‘ were

‘ were the chief of my fixed and regular ex-
‘ pences of that sort : what I gave away occa-
‘ sionally can be no rule for the future, there-
‘ fore it would be to no purpose to mention it.
‘ I can scarce hope that the comfort your com-
‘ pliance with these requests would be to me,
‘ can avail with a man who sets so small a value
‘ on my happiness, but I beg it for your own
‘ sake. Your servant’s being the leader of the
‘ attack that was made on this house, together
‘ with my sudden flight, will raise suspicions
‘ little to your honour, which would be openly
‘ declared with all the additions that anger and
‘ malice can suggest, if you appropriate my for-
‘ tune to any other use, than I have employed
‘ it in. If you let it go on in the same way, or
‘ divide what used to be spent in my family
‘ amongst the different funds I have mentioned,
‘ you will bribe them to silence, which, as re-
‘ putation must be of some value to every one,
‘ cannot but be worth your consideration. I
‘ have now ended all that I had to say, but am
‘ at the same loss how to conclude as I was how
‘ to begin. The title of relation which you
‘ bear to me, brings your crime afresh and in its
‘ worst colours into my mind; any address of
‘ affection and tenderness in which I once took
‘ so much pleasure, would be but ill applied to
‘ my greatest enemy. I must therefore end this
‘ abruptly.’

She then put up in a bundle what things were
requisite for her to carry, which indeed were no
more than her money and a little change of linen.
Having thus finished all the necessary preparations
for her journey, she spent the rest of her time in
a sort of secret farewell of all her domestics and
dependants,

dependants, and wrote advice to such as she thought wanted it in any thing particularly; thinking that its being accompanied with the solemnity of a perhaps eternal farewell, might make the stronger impression on their minds. All that she had written she put in a place where it would be soon found. She retired into her room pretty early; and that her flight might be the longer unknown, she gave orders not to be disturbed in the morning, saying, she would endeavour to sleep as much the next day as she could, in hopes of finding a refreshment she had not of a long time experienced.

As soon as her servants were gone to bed, she stole gently out of the house, and directed her steps towards the next town, where she had any chance of getting a vehicle to carry her on with greater speed. This town was ten miles off, a walk which her strength was not equal to. It being then the midst of summer, and the weather very fine, the darkness of the night was no impediment to her journey; but she was frequently forced to rest in her way, and found herself three miles from the town, when day began to appear. She could get but little farther, when weary with fatigue and oppressed in spirit, life with strength seeming to fail her, she fainted away.

A young gentleman, who by accident had been obliged to take up his lodging the night before at a very bad inn just by, not being able to sleep, had been tempted by the fineness of the morning, to walk out, and look at the country. Seeing a woman in that condition lying on the grass, compassion prompted him to lend her all the assistance in his power; but when he observed

the beauty of her face, and gracefulness of her person, which were charming even in death, his desire of recovering her was still greatly encreased. By his care he brought her to herself in a little time. But her surprize to find herself in the arms of a stranger, was near having the same effect upon her, that her fatigue had had before. He, watchful of her countenance, to avoid giving her any a'arm, no sooner perceived her able to support herself, than he retired to a little distance from her. As soon as she had perfectly recovered her senses, she tried to pursue her journey, but found herself too much enfeebled to walk; this weakness heightening her distress, she was no longer able to preserve her courage, but given up to despair sat down and wept.

Bernardo (the name of him who had so kindly succoured her) came towards her, expressed the most tender compassion for the grief she seemed to be under, and begged if there was any way whereby he might relieve her, that she would instruct him in it. He told her, that common humanity would make him rejoice in being able to do service to any one, but the pleasure would be much encreased when that one must be a person in whose relief no dangers could appear terrible; that nature, when it made her, had given her a right to command, and mankind a sufficient reward in the pleasure of obeying; and that he should think himself happy if, by the service of his whole life, he could in any degree relieve the misfortunes with which her's seemed to begin.

The warmth of his manner and expressions, revived the fears which his respect had removed. He perceived it; begged her to be under no apprehensions,

prehenſions, aſſured her he would leave her that inſtant if his preſence made her uneaſy, but entreated her to permit him to carry her to ſome houſe, more fit for one ſo ill than the open air; that if ſhe would inform him where ſhe intended to go, he would joyfully convey her there, and would then leave her, if ſhe deſired it. Theſe aſſurances, the youth, innocence, and gentleneſs that appeared in his countenance, pretty well diſſipated her fears; ſhe told him that her deſign had been to go to ——— but that ſhe found herſelf too weak to walk any farther. She gladly accepted of the offer he made her of his horſes, not willing to have any conveyance brought to her, leſt it might create obſervation, and lend ſome light to her uncle of the way ſhe had travelled; and ſhe was ſenſible of the neceſſity of leaving a publick road, now that the return of day would expoſe her to the chance of being known.

Bernardo returned to the inn, and brought a couple of horſes, one equipped for a woman and the other for himſelf, leaving his ſervant there, as he ſuſpected by ſome of her expreſſions, that ſhe was deſirous of being ſeen by as few as poſſible. As they rode to the town, he expreſſed ſome curioſity to know what had befallen her, perceiving by the bundle ſhe had with her, that ſhe had intended to undertake a journey, and yet ſhe did not appear like one uſed to travel in that manner; beſides, the early hour that he found her, her melancholy, and her fear of being ſeen, excited his curioſity. She deſired him to excuſe her anſwering his queſtions with any exactneſs; his extreme civility to her deſerved all the ſatisfaction ſhe could give him, which was thus much:

she was indeed what people called run away; but not from common cruelty, but from such villainous treachery that she could not remain in the place she was, without the greatest danger of her life and honour; that necessity, not choice, was the reason of her undertaking a journey unfit for her strength and sex; that her intention was to go about twenty miles further, with as much expedition as she could, not thinking she should be safe from pursuit at a less distance. Who she was, she intended never to make known, as that would declare the person who had injured her, to whom she was too nearly allied to wish to expose him. Besides she was desirous to banish even from her own thoughts all her past life and circumstances, as in all appearance the comparison of it, with what was reserved for her future fate, would be little to her satisfaction.

Though her account was so general, yet it still added to the compassion and regard Bernardo had at first felt for her, and made him conceive it necessary to carry her to the most obscure inn in the town. He begged her to call herself his sister when they were there, as that would make her the less liable to be traced by any inquiries. When she got to the place, though she found herself very ill, she desired him to get her some conveyance to carry her farther, the rather as she was apprehensive that a little fever she found upon her might increase, and she be confined by it to a place much nearer her own house than was consistent with her safety. At her desire, Bernardo got her a post chaise, but unable to leave her when he saw her so ill, he accompanied her on horseback to the town where she intended

to take a little rest. She tried all means to make him forbear his attendance on her, though his conversation greatly relieved the pains of her mind, by preserving her from reflecting on the past, or anticipating the future. And his care was very necessary to her ; for he could, by being more used to travelling, better provide for her convenience than she could have done. Then his good sense, his great attention to her, his modesty, politeness and humanity, made him a companion that must have given great pleasure to any one in an easy state of mind, and much relieve those in anxiety. All the virtues of his mind seemed imprinted on his countenance, which in beauty could be excelled by nothing but her own. It is not strange then that she should at last acquiesce in such a companion, though at first she feared him. He was already too strongly attracted by her charms to be able to leave her, especially when he found her grow so ill, when she came to the inn, that she was obliged to go to bed immediately.

By the accounts that were brought him, he feared she might be in a high fever, which was but too much confirmed by the physician he had sent for, who declared her to be in great danger. It was this that shewed him how great an impression their short acquaintance had made on his heart : he was not able to keep from her, and the relation that the people of the house thought subsisted between them, made it appear proper. Nor could she find fault with such kind attendance, in a place where she could hope for little care ; she was too little used to dissimulation to object to any thing that modesty and real decorum did not forbid ; though she would not

have received a visit from him in her bed, if she had been well, yet she could not resist his earnest entreaties, and the excessive distress and agony he appeared in, at the least hint of a desire of his leaving her. Her fever continuing very violent, he attended her both night and day. Unable to rest, all places were equally uneasy to him, when absent from her. When with her, he had the comfort of giving the most affectionate attendance, enjoying some conversation, and hopes of being a little relief to her by his care, and of gaining her esteem, which he found next to her life, was what he most wished for.

But notwithstanding his care, the fear of her death increased daily, and with it his love. The courage and composure with which she bore the danger she was apprised of, added to his esteem and admiration. The fifteenth day, the physician declared he had no hopes of her recovery. She heard this declaration unmoved; and when she saw Bernardo's grief, she begged him not to let so short an acquaintance bring any unhappiness upon him; that nothing could give her pain in the sentence that was passed upon her, but the fear of his suffering by having been so great a comfort to her; that he ought to consider, that in losing life, she should be secure of endless rest; that a good conscience made her have little reason to dread the entering into another state, whereas if death was not come to her relief, this life promised her many troubles. 'Consider me, said she, though not used to luxury, yet bred up in indolence and ease, and, till lately, free from all trouble and difficulties, and able to preserve others from them likewise; entirely ignorant of all the customs of the world, unknown
to

to all in it, but such as are capable of injuring me, or incapable of assisting me, even with their counsels; now exposed to all the distresses, which even to those who have been brought up in a way of life that might better enable one to encounter them, must appear very formidable, and add to all this the most cutting vexation upon my mind. These considerations should make you rejoice rather than grieve at my death; and let another reflection weigh with you, which is, that as great reason as I have to wish my life at an end, I cannot see this end give you pain, without fearing it; and yet were I to live, we must be divided.'

'Never, my angel, never!' cried Bernardo, 'If heaven restores your health, imitate its mercy so far as never to divide me from you. I cannot live if you die, nor could I call that life which I should lead absent from you, altho' it was to be a little relieved by the hopes of seeing you again. I never felt true happiness, till I saw you; nor can I ever feel misery, but in parting with you; to share your difficulties, your misfortunes, is the height of my ambition, as I might hope thereby to lessen the burthen to you; and if I could not lessen it, yet, if I did not encrease it, whilst I suffered equally, I must feel a happiness in the enjoyment of your presence, and conversation, that an empire could not give me. Oh! my dearest angel, I never knew love, I but imperfectly guessed at it by description, till I knew you. Merciful heaven! let me not feel the heaviest of misfortunes, by depriving me of her in whom all my happiness is centered. Try my patience, my resignation, in every other evil that can be inflicted on me;

if she were spared, I could joyfully submit; for every thing else is become indifferent to me.'

Here grief stopped his tongue, and Cornelia was a little relieved from the agitation this overflowing of his affection had put her in. Her heart was too well disposed towards him, not to feel pleasure at finding his so tender; her weakness and decay could not deprive her's of its softness. She began to wish for life, and to fear death, as a thing that would for ever divide them.

As soon as she had enough recovered her spirits to speak, she began thus: 'I find my strength almost gone, but yet my heart lends me enough, Bernardo, to take this last adieu. Believe me full of gratitude for your care and tenderness, and of affection for your merits. No man, before yourself, ever made the sound of love pleasing to me. My aim was always to put an instant end to their courtship, and never more, by seeing them, venture to hear it repeated; but if life would stay with me, I could listen to you with satisfaction: little able or inclined to dissimble, I will add, that if by a long acquaintance, I had found you what you seem to me to be, I should regret the loss of a life I could pass with you; but as that cannot be, I can the better bear the approach of death; and only beg you not to make it appear surrounded by terrors, by softening me, and shewing how much it will grieve you. Consider, I must submit to its uncontrollable power, and that I shall be delivered from misfortunes, and you from being any more a witness to them. Resign me to the will of providence, and let not my death affect your spirits: your youth, and dissipation will soon enable

enable you to forget me : for my sake, try it to the utmost of your power : your promise to endeavour it, would smoothe my way to death.'

Her spirits were too much exhausted to suffer her to continue her farewell. The state of his mind made him incapable of returning her any answer : he had hold of one of her hands, and bathed it with his tears, which flowed too fast to leave him the liberty of speech : the emotion his silent grief gave her, added to the agitation of her spirits, and the weakness that succeeded the extraordinary effort she had made to take her last adieu, got the better of her strength, and she grew quite insensible. After continuing so for some time, she fell into a slumber, which flattered Bernardo with a return of hope. This encreased, by her finding herself considerably refreshed, after a sleep of four hours ; and in all appearance, her fever much abated. From that time she continued mending, and was soon permitted to leave her bed, though she remained very weak, and was not able to undertake a journey till near a month after. During that time Bernardo and she enjoyed the pleasure of each other's conversation without interruption ; and having sufficiently explained the situation of their hearts, when they imagined they were speaking for the last time to each other, they could not pretend to make a secret of an affection too virtuous to require being concealed : they entertained each other with it, and took pleasure in seeing they were thereby both made happy. Cornelia, conscious of no thought that could not bear the light, and too ignorant of false decorum to believe it necessary to try to hide what was not founded upon, nor accompa-

nied with, any bad principle, wished not to conceal from Bernardo, the impression which his merit and the obligations she had received from him had made, as it seemed to give him the greatest felicity.

While their time passed so agreeably, her recovery was patiently waited for ; both by herself, and one no less anxious for her welfare. A less delicate and disinterested lover would perhaps have feared it, as she gave him no hopes of any union, or correspondence with him, after her leaving that place ; but he could not wish the return of her health delayed, though for the prolonging of his happiness. And yet the satisfaction he would have received from observing the whole progress of her recovery, was greatly allayed by knowing the consequence. As her health improved, the spirits of both seemed to decay, and melancholy to take the place of sickness. Though the diminution of the money she had brought from home with her, made her sensible of the necessity of her speedy departure ; yet she could not without the utmost regret think of it, as it might deprive her of so much happiness. Bernardo omitted no endeavour to prevail on her to marry him, but she constantly refused to comply with his request. ‘ Bernardo,’ said she, ‘ cease to ask what I cannot grant ; my self-love is a very strong advocate for what you propose ; but powerful as it is, can never conquer my sincere affection for you, nor blind me so far as to make me forget that, by marrying of you, I must either ruin you, or expose myself to what is the only next misfortune that can bear any comparison to that, the loss of my reputation. If you were to own me as your wife,

In all the poverty and obscurity I now appear in ; can we expect that a mother-in-law, whom you confess you have no reason to think of a disinterested disposition, would not make use of the power your father left her, of depriving you of your very subsistence whilst she lives ; at least, the possibility of it is sufficient to deter me from permitting you to run any such hazard. If I was to declare who I am, my birth and fortune must remove her objections ; but then it would expose you and myself to the hatred, and resentment of a man too powerful for us to contend with. Were we to take the other course, and could we conceal our marriage so well as not to occasion suspicions in her, and thereby hazard your fortune ; that concealment must destroy my reputation, for the loss of which, innocence is not a sufficient comfort ; nor the greatest happiness, the company of a most tenderly beloved friend, a sufficient recompence. I have too great a regard for you to bear such aspersions for your sake ; I could not be worthy of your attachment, if any one could, with the appearance of reason, suspect me of a want of virtue. It is necessary for all persons to avoid being criminal ; but women must be equally cautious of not appearing so : to give room for suspicion, in us is a crime. I could never consent to an union that must be attended by such consequences, in how flattering a light soever it may appear to me, when I consider it as a means of constantly enjoying your conversation. I am sensible that, in your absence, I shall feel an unhappiness which will banish from my thoughts, or make every other evil that the passed has inflicted, or the future can threaten, appear trifling. As no pleasure

can compensate the loss of you, neither can any suffering compare with the pain I shall feel from it. But yet, I so sincerely love you, that I am determined not only to leave you, but to do it without corresponding with you. Encompassed with all happy and pleasing circumstances, these will, with my absence and silence, make you forget a sudden passion. And though that, of all others, is the most grievous thought to me; yet I value your ease so much above my own, that I will do all that is in my power to effect it; without being able to say I can, without severe pangs, with my endeavours the success that may probably attend them. Another reason for this resolution, is, the little benefit that could arise from any farther correspondence between us. We should both of us thereby nourish a hopeless passion; and should at last be forced to take the step we now think cruel; when the passion was still more deeply rooted, and had habit, as well as longer experienced reason and increased tenderness, to make it more difficult to overcome. Nor would I venture myself always to listen to the power of your persuasions: I cannot answer that I should always feel so disinterested an affection, as to forbear marrying you. Who knows but a time might come, that self-love might conquer that I bear to Bernardo?

‘Oh! my heavenly Cornelia,’ answered Bernardo, ‘call not that love to me, which inspires you with such cruelty. Can you wish to make those you love miserable? I could grow as insatiable for riches as the greatest miser, by thinking of the joy I should have in seeing them in your possession: we are all misers, we are all avaricious of what appears best to us; but the

man

man who accumulates wealth, and whose soul is fixed upon it, is only called so: whilst I, who would take much more pains to obtain my Cornelia, cherish my treasure with more love, guard it with greater care, and be as covetous of her affection, of her conversation, of her looks and smiles, as the greatest miser could be of his gold, should escape the name ! It is the object, not the passion, that is blameable. I am not ashamed of wishing for riches, since it proceeds from a desire to see you happy, and not from any love to them ; nor with any other view than as a means of pleasure to you : they can give me nothing besides, that will afford me a moment's satisfaction, like what I feel in conversing with, or looking on you. Can it appear strange then, that whatever joy I might receive in communicating riches to you, I despise them when only to be enjoyed by myself ; that I had rather partake of your poverty, try to smooth your difficulties, and relieve your cares, than to be master of the kingdom's wealth, separated from you ? Can you think so meanly of me, as to imagine I can prefer an easy subsistence to such blissful indulgence, or compare the possession of a little gold with all the trifling enjoyments it can give, all that can please the vanity or the laziness of man, to being possessed of one so truly rich, one endowed by nature with a sort of treasure far beyond what fortune can bestow, the beauties of the outward form, which are even eclipsed by the graces of the mind, and the virtues of the soul ? In such a treasure would be my first, and my greatest delight ; herein would my vanity, as well as every worthy taste, be gratified : every minute more delightful and more beloved ; time, or age, or any of the reverses

verses in this world could not diminish my happiness. I could fear no foe but death. Think not, my angel, that we could ever suffer from poverty; the honest and industrious may always provide a subsistence for themselves; with such a pattern of unparallel'd virtue before me, I could not fail of one of these qualifications: and who, that had so noble a motive to industry as the care of my Cornelia, could fail of being industrious? The ease of inherited wealth, with all its enjoyments, are things I should be insensible to without you; the invaluable blessing, which must give merit to the rest, was first given to me; therefore call not that bringing ruin on me, which is the only source from whence I could derive happiness. If you have the least regard for me, can you think of letting me lead a life made miserable by your absence, and bear the still more cruel thought of my living in ignorance of your safety, your hard fate, and of that on which all my happiness depends, the situation of your heart? Can you thus chuse to doom one to despair, for whom you feel any partiality? and wish him to feel all the pains and anxieties, which such ignorance concerning you must necessarily occasion? How can I reconcile this to the kind assurances my blessed charmer has given me, of some regard for me? Is it possible not to doubt that she has misconstrued a little compassion which my tender love awakened in her soul, when I see she can thus contradict by her actions all that her words had given me room to hope? If you had any notion of the pangs of absence, of the tender fears that must incessantly rack the breast of a true lover, every moment that he is not assured the dear object is in health and safety, you could

not thus persist in exposing me to them ; you cannot be inhuman, therefore you must be ignorant, and not imagine I can feel for you that love you have not for me."

Such a doubt made Cornelia again break silence. "Add not," said she, "by such suspicions of my truth, to what I already suffer from the conflicts within my breast ; it is very difficult for me to preserve that behaviour and resolution which is but doing a proper justice to you ; when you have no wish but to promote my happiness, should I destroy yours ? No, Bernardo, my resolution is unalterable ; but put not so cruel a construction upon it, as to believe it arises from indifference ; heaven knows how sensible I am of all the pains you mention ; but as time will relieve you from your share of them sooner than from those I might bring upon you, I can bear to inflict them, and for your benefit will endure my own, tho' not likely to be soon overcome, as melancholy, which threatens to be my lot, carefully collects and preserves every circumstance that can add to misery : but I can endure them better than the thought of bringing you into any distresses."

In such discourses as these passed the last week they spent together, but without having any effect on the mind of either. Cornelia could never be brought to change her purpose, nor Bernardo to agree to the execution of it. He would have been happy if his consent had been necessary to the effecting of it : but at length the time came when they must part, and the coach was ready to carry her to Paris, where she thought she might best maintain and conceal herself, before Bernardo had ceased urging all the
most

most persuasive arguments love could invent, to prevail on her to desist from her intent, and to permit him to accompany her. The cruel summons interrupted him in an unfinished sentence, and took from him all power to proceed. They were both struck dumb and motionless at the hearing that moment was arrived which had not been made less terrible by expectation: what they suffered could not be alleviated by any preparation. As soon as Cornelia had enough recovered herself to be able to walk, she summoned all her resolution to enable her to leave him. He at first, quite distracted with despair, falling on his knees, held her by the gown, whilst he uttered the most passionate intreaties to prevail on her not to leave him, and behaved with such distraction as added terror to her grief. With all that reason and tenderness could suggest, she at length calmed him, and inclined him to submit patiently to her, whose will he could on no other occasion have contradicted. He embraced her with all the tenderness of love and despair; his tears flowed too fast for him to say more than, "My ever dear Cornelia, forget not a wretch who has no happiness but in your love; a purer, more sincere affection you can meet with in no man; let that be looked upon as some merit in me, and whatever defects I have, be assured I am not capable of any towards you. If the truest love deserves remembrance, preserve me in yours, and let not absence make you forget, that the loss of your love would reduce me to the greatest degree of misery, a human being can endure. My angel, at least make me this promise, to apply to me if you should be under any difficulties out of which I can extricate you: without.

without this I cannot live. Oh ! merciful providence, preserve her to be mine !" She was not more mistress of herself ; she began often to speak, but tears and sighs interrupted her words, and she could only say, " My constant prayer, my dear Bernardo, will be for your happiness ; neglect nothing that can contribute to it ; think that the hope you will not, is my only comfort : to whom, in any distress, can I apply, but to the master of my soul ? May God grant us another meeting, when a separation may not so soon follow it !"

The constant desire to add still to what they had said, and the want of power to bid each other adieu, would have kept them together much longer, if the impatience of the passengers in the coach, had not sent them repeated summonses ; and at last she was obliged to pay that obedience to importunity, which she had denied to her inclination, and leave Bernardo in a situation incapable of reflexion, and deprived of hope and sense.

The slowness of Cornelia's coming surprized the company that waited for her, less than the condition they saw her in when she appeared. Compassion soon arose in the breast of every one. So much beauty, youth, innocence, and sorrow, blended in one face they had never beheld. So many charms could permit no heart to remain insensible to what she seemed to suffer ; and her grief disarmed the envy she might have awakened in those of her own sex : they can pity beauty when distressed, even tho' they before wished it to be so. The good-natured attention of her companions became very useful to Cornelia : the return of civility, which she thought herself ob-
liged

liged to make, a little dissipated her thoughts, and by throwing her out of the deep melancholy, into which she was plunged, enabled her to flatter herself with a little hope of seeing her present affliction removed. Curiosity, it is easy to believe, could be no longer restrained than till she was able to satisfy it. She had then many questions put to her concerning the cause of her grief, and of her journey. In answer to the first, she said, in few words, she had left all her friends; and to the second, that she went in hopes of gaining a subsistence in Paris, either in service, or by work. The humanity of the men, that were part of the company, made them watchful to stop all such questions as soon as possible, perceiving how painful it was to her to answer them, and to divert her thoughts from, rather than direct them to, the cause of her uneasiness.

By such attentions her journey passed off more easily than she could have expected; she found her mind much relieved by the dissipation; and for her greater ease, she had an offer before the end of her journey from one of the passengers, (an old lady who had been very assiduous in her endeavours to amuse her) of lodging at her house, and a recommendation to such persons, as, whatever way of life she fixed upon, should prove sufficient to procure her an easy maintenance. This was so thankfully and readily accepted of, that Cornelia desired to be set down at her house, which she had the satisfaction to find was in an obscure part of the town; and she thought she could not be better placed to avoid being seen by any of her uncle's attendants, when he came to Paris.

At the widow's house they were received by her three daughters, two nieces, and two that were introduced to her as lodgers. They all appeared too gay to be much relished by Cornelia in her present state of melancholy and fatigue; so she begged leave to retire to the room which was allotted for her, and that without any farther attendance or ceremony she might go to bed. This was easily granted, as her appearance had given no great joy to any of this young party. She passed the next day in her room, being little able or inclined to go into company. The day after the widow thought it time to put an end to her solitude, and prevailed on her to make one of their party, which was the more readily obtained, as she had pretty well recovered her fatigue, and had nothing to make her oppose it but the love of retirement, which was natural to the melancholy of her mind. The widow tried to raise her spirits by the fullest assurances of putting her into a way of making her fortune, if she would but be ruled by her counsel. Her assurances went farther than Cornelia even wished, she only desired to obtain a subsistence; but the widow, who was no friend to procrastination, began to put her promises in execution in the way she had from the first intended.

Cornelia was very ignorant of the wickedness of the world, and never suspected that any woman was so lost to all virtue, as to live by betraying her own sex. This made her surprize the less when she saw her landlady introduce a gentleman into her chamber in the evening, and then leave her alone with him. She supposed it was some one, who, from a resemblance of names, imagined himself acquainted with her, and expected

pected to be delivered from his visit, as soon as by a full sight of her he had discovered his mistake. The surprize that appeared in his countenance confirmed her in this opinion; but it arose only from the impression the first sight of her had made on him. The infamous woman, who had introduced him, had made great encomiums on her beauty, and exacted a very great price for the preference she had given him, in presenting him to her before any other; but yet this had raised no expectation in him beyond that of a common beauty, as the strain of those women is generally much the same about any one they intend to make profit by. The excessive beauty of her face, and the gracefulness of her person struck him with surprize; and the innocence that shone in one, and the dignity that appeared in the other, infused an awe into him, which even the place he found her in could not overcome. The consternation he seemed in, as it confirmed her in her first supposition, gave her the time to try to deliver him from it, and herself from an unwelcome intruder; she therefore told him: "Sir, I perceive some mistake has brought you here, you find you know me not, which I could not but be sure of, if your behaviour did not express it, because I am certain, I never saw you before; perhaps some of the people in the house may direct you better;" and immediately rung the bell. As he did not doubt but she knew where she was, he looked upon this as a reproach for a respect not usual in those places, or very impudent hypocrisy: this removed all the awe she had inspired him with, and he began to assure her, that the behaviour she observed was only occasioned by the surprize he was in, at the sight of
of

of beauty so infinitely superior to what he had ever beheld. The familiarity of his declaration amazed her ; but she was infinitely more so, upon his following it with gentle pressures of her hand, and such sort of liberties, as she could possibly conceive no excuse for. She immediately flew from him to get out of the room, not choosing to remain in such company ; but how was her amazement turned into terror, on finding the door lock'd ! However, hoping this was accidental, she rung the bell again with all possible violence. One of the servants came up to enquire what was the occasion of it, but when she required to have the door opened, went down without giving an answer.

Mr. De Rone (so we shall call the gentleman in the room with her) was all this time mixing promises with his caresses, and trying to put an end to what destroyed the return he expected. Finding they had no effect, he suspected her of cunning instead of modesty, and sufficiently captivated to comply with what he thought she aimed at, he offered her a considerable settlement for life, and all the gratifications that the life of a kept mistress can allow of ; but he found all this served only to heighten her fright and indignation ; every emotion in her face appeared so natural, her modesty and surprize so unaffected, that it made him begin to doubt whether what he had taken for acting a part was not the true sentiments of virtue ; but yet her not seeming to guess what sort of a house she was at, appeared so wide of probability, that he could not tell how to construe it. After repeated trials to call people to her assistance, she tried to prevail on him to leave her ; she conjured him not to insult a woman,

woman, whose birth and conduct had exempted her from any such behaviour from a man of any honour ; she accused him of having taken some methods to remove the people out of the house ; told him that her life was in his power, but that her virtue and honour was in no person's, whilst she lived she would maintain both ; that as weak as her sex might make her be thought, she should always be strong enough to defend them ; as for her life she was indifferent about it, she could part with it that instant without regret ; but whilst it was left her, she should always preserve her honour ; of many blessings it was all that was left, because it was the only one that was in her power to preserve. She had already suffered too much in hearing those infamous proposals he had made her ; she was sorry there was a man breathing who could think any thing was an equivalent for lost innocence ; but that if he had any honour, she begged him to leave her in the quiet possession of the only thing she was anxious about, her virtue ; that all he could offer had no charms for her. She added to this such pathetic intreaties, that Mr. de Rone, who was a man of great honour, and possessed of every virtue but chastity, was greatly moved. To clear up what appeared strange to him, he inquired how long she had been at that house, and how she came there. She gave him an account of the whole. He asked her if she knew what sort of a house she was at. Her ignorance about that question surprized him ; the more he examined her, the more he found it real. " Madam," said he, " where have you lived to be so ignorant of what I thought all the world knew ; that there are houses inhabited by nothing but common prostitutes,

stitutes, of which one woman is the governess, and has the chief profit; where men resort who are lazy in their pleasures, or too scrupulous to debauch women whose passions or weakness may be greater than their virtue, if assailed with all the arts of man; and that this is one of those houses."

It is impossible to describe the terror that possessed Cornelia at the danger of her situation, and the detestation of the characters he described; she begged him, in an agony of mind that he sincerely pitied, to tell her how to escape safely from that house. He assured her he would help her to effect it, and renewed the proposals he at first made, as a means of removing her from it. This increased her uneasiness; she cried out, "What am I exposed to! no one near me that has either virtue or honour, no one that will not insult affliction and distress?" Mr. De Rone begged her to forgive him, assured her he would never more mention any such thing to her, but obey her commands in every thing. He only intreated her to give him a little account of the way she had lived in, to remain so ignorant of the badness of a world, in which she had had time to arrive at such perfection. She complied with his request. He was so charmed with her sense and innocence, that he offered to carry her to a milliner to whom he was related: one who had been reduced by misfortunes, but was perfectly honest. Tho' the ill fortune Cornelia had had at this first house where she was received, made her more fearful of any other she might get into; yet when she considered that he could not carry her to a place more convenient for any bad purposes, and therefore could have no reason to wish

to remove her on that account, she complied with his offer, and begged for its speedy execution. He advised her to take what part of her things she could conceal, with her; which was easily done, and handing her down stairs, he told the old woman he was going to carry her a short tour, and shew her a little of the town. This blinded her watchfulness, and she rejoiced at her success, in having so soon overcome one who she feared would have made a longer resistance.

As soon as they got to Mr. De Rone's Coach, he ordered it to the milliner's, where Cornelia hired a room, and desired to board; for she liked the appearance of the family, who seemed to attend more to their business than to their persons; and hoped to be here furnished with a means of subsisting without breaking into the little sum she had by her. In this place she lived for some time, not disappointed of the quiet she expected. She had nothing to disturb her tranquillity, but the absence of Bernardo. He was always present to her thoughts, and the greatest pleasure she enjoyed was contemplating his picture, which she constantly carried about with her, as the only remains of the happy hours she spent with him; except the more lively image of him in her heart. The employment her poverty obliged her to, busied her hands; but whilst they were providing her with the means to preserve her body, she could gratify her mind with tracing back former scenes, recollecting every word he spoke, what looks, what actions adorned and dignified his words, what delicacy and purity of mind accompanied his love; how tender, how noble, and how amiable

amiable every thought he uttered ; how charming a symmetry between his mind and person, each alike beautiful and faultless. These were her usual reflections. Then would arise hopes of being once again made happy with the sight of him. She pleased herself in fancied scenes, imagined herself united to him for ever, putting him in possession of a fortune he deserved, and making him happy by giving him a power to make others so. Herself his first care, blessed in his tenderness and friendship ; in her own, obedience and the constant endeavour of pleasing him ; shewing her gratitude for the happiness he communicated to her, and striving to return him an equal portion. A gloomy thought would soon destroy all this gay delusion, and she would reflect how much more likely it was that a sudden passion should wear out of a heart so young ; that another might fill the place she had been imagining herself in. Or supposing him constant, what reason had she to hope for success like what she had been flattering herself with ? They might never meet again, or if they did, it might only be to part a second time. These fears drew tears from her eyes : she used to weep over his picture, and address it with all the passion of tender grief, as if it was her real Bernardo.

Such were her thoughts in the solitude she lived in ; for her life might be called so, though she was in the house with a family. One of the few things that broke in upon her day, (which seldom consisted of less than nineteen hours of the four and twenty) was the children of her landlady ; whom she taught, according as their ages would permit, to write, read, work, and

cast accounts ; observing that their mother by ill health, business, and a dejection of spirits, which is apt to attend reverses of fortune, and to prevent their making the present as easy as they might ; was rendered incapable of taking the necessary care for their instruction. Her landlady's company at meals, and in the evenings, frequent visits from Mr. De Rone, whose merit made him always welcome, as his behaviour never deviated from the generosity with which he had acted towards her ; were other interruptions. He often found her in tears, which greatly affected him. He omitted no endeavours to prevail on her to permit him to make her a present of a sum sufficient to relieve her from any necessity of controuling her inclinations, by working for her subsistence ; as he found by conversing with her, that she had been used to a very different way of spending her time. He assured her that he had no view but doing a little justice to her merit ; that though there was no one in the world for whom he had so sincere a regard, yet he would promise never to appear in her sight, if she would oblige him in accepting of what might be an ease to her, but could not be felt by him, whose fortune was so much above all his wants. But he could not prevail on her to accept of this ; her rule was never to receive an obligation, for which the giver could possibly, any moment of his life, wish for a return she could not grant. She had refused Bernardo the same request ; it is not to be wondered at then, that she did not grant it to Mr. De Rone, as highly as she esteemed him. He attempted all methods of making her presents ; but as she could not doubt who was the giver, she had it

in

in her power to return them ; in which she never failed. She told him she had already the highest obligation to him that could be conferred ; the only additional favour she could ever receive, was the continuance of his friendship.

After she had been at this house a little above two months, she was surprized and greatly affected by a melancholy scene at home. One morning as she was indulging herself in looking on Bernardo's picture, and meditating on the beloved original, she was awakened from the tender reveries of her imagination, by the cries and lamentations of all the children. She hastened to enquire into the cause of it, and found they were crying over their mother, who was in fits. The servants were in too great consternation to give her any distinct account ; but when the poor woman was brought to herself, she told her that a man had just informed her, that there was an action out against her for a debt of forty pounds ; that though she had never had spirits to examine into the situation of her affairs, yet she knew she had other debts, and could not doubt but to secure themselves, they would all fall upon her at a time ; that her ruin, and what was more, that of her dear children, was inevitable ; that she had no prospect but a prison for herself, and they had no chance of having either a subsistence, a nurse, or conductor.

Cornelia could not have remained an unfeeling spectator of so moving a scene, even though she had never conceived a particular regard for her, from the kindness with which she had behaved to her, and the honesty she had observed in all her actions. She immediately begged her

not to afflict herself so immoderately; told her she had fifty pounds, which should go towards satisfying the most clamorous of her creditors; and that Mr. De Rone's generosity would not let a relation be reduced to any distresses of that kind; that though he unfortunately went out of town the night before, yet he was not too far off to send her relief before she could be driven to the utmost necessity. Madame Miteau (for that was the milliner's name) answered, that she had already received such obligations from Mr. De Rone, and had made so ill a use of them, that she could not think of applying for farther favours; his generosity had enabled her to undertake that way of life, and with such advantages as promised her infallible success; but at first she was so stupified with her misfortunes, that she could not attend to her affairs; and that when they had been for some time neglected, they became so intricate, and she was so fearful lest she should find them turn out amiss, that she had never had the courage to settle them; therefore must blame herself, and would take the deserved punishment as her due, if the distress of her children did not depend on her's.

Cornelia at last prevailed so far as to pacify her, and desired her to let her have the regulating of her affairs, and she should in a very little time inform her of the true state of them.

The first thing she did, was immediately to pay the money for which the action had been brought; that it might not be heard of, and thereby give the alarm to her other creditors, and occasion their molesting her. She then, by Madame de Miteau's books and bills settled the account of her trade, from its first beginning to
tha

that time ; and by the ballance shewed her, that her affairs were not irretrievable, if carefully managed. If Mr. De Rone added a little to his former bounty, concerning which she would write to him, she would again begin the world upon an easy footing. But Madame Miteau was, from the first knowledge of her misfortunes, thrown into so deep a melancholy and stupefaction, that nothing Cornelia could say made the least impression. Finding that, she took what methods were most adviseable for her recovery, and in the meantime took the management of her affairs. By the regularity Cornelia introduced into the whole, the new branches with which her ingenuity enabled her to extend their trade ; and the industry, of which she set an example, to all that were concerned in the shop, and took care to have followed by them, soon brought more business to it than ever. As some of the children were old enough to be of great use, and all of them of some ; she ordered it so, that each should contribute with their services as far as they were able. The eldest daughter she taught book-keeping, and the management of their little family, and all the œconomy that could be useful to them. Others she informed how to serve customers, and to keep the things they had to sell in such order as should enable them to be expeditious in their parts. The youngest were put to plain work, till they were old enough to find out more profitable sorts.

In about a month the good woman recovered her spirits, sufficiently to see of what service Cornelia had been to her. Which of itself, quite re-establish'd her. The joy of finding her affairs in so good a way, with the means which

had been taken for the care of a dejection, (neglected whilst it was less violent) brought her to a happier state of mind than she had enjoyed from the time of her husband's death; who without her knowledge had spent on other women, the fortune that should have provided for her and her children.

About this time Mr. De Rone returned to Paris, too strongly attracted by Cornelia's charms to bear a longer absence, Madame Miteau immediately told him of the obligations she was under to her. He was charmed with her goodness in undertaking to extricate that unhappy woman out of her difficulties, and the sense and spirit with which she performed it. He would gladly have looked on the sum she gave Madame Miteau as lent to himself, and advanced upon the knowledge of the joy with which he would pay it at his return. But Cornelia refused to be re-imburfed: it was great joy to her, that low as she was reduced, she had yet had it in her power to make some happy by parting with a trifle. She told him she would be more obliged to him if he would by adding to his former bounty toward his cousin, make her affairs easy. He enquired how much was requisite; and from the account Cornelia gave him, he discharged all her creditors, and added to her stock as much as she thought necessary.

The fresh proofs Mr. De Rone now had of Cornelia's merit encreased his affection. He thought he had had sufficient experience of her character, which was the only thing he waited for to offer her the command of himself and fortune. He admired that spirit of independency, which made her spend her time in work so little suited

to her taste. He observed, that she would often encroach on the hours destined, by the most vigilant and most studious, to sleep, to indulge herself in reading; rather than hazard a maintenance which she was determined to receive only from her own hands. Instead of the common entertainments, to which vanity generally leads women who have not a chance of being near so much admired, her sole recreation was in books, when she could afford herself time for amusement. He found it was no new one, but that it had once filled those hours which were now in great measure employed in working; by the frequent conversations he had had with her, he had gratified his curiosity as well as entertained his mind, by discovering the extent of her learning, which notwithstanding her great reserve on these subjects, he perceived to be quite surprising. As he had at first resolved to be directed by what his farther observation should shew him, he had never given way to any thing, that could make her suspect him of more than great generosity, friendship, and an admiration which was natural, even in a heart untouched with love. But he now thought a concealment as unnecessary as it was difficult, since he was sufficiently convinced of her merit, and was determined, that his happiness should be delayed by nothing but her will; and he had but little reason to find that averse to him, since he was as well qualified by nature to gain a woman's heart, as by fortune to obtain her consent.

Mr. De Rone was perfectly well made in his person, had a very fine air and great dignity; his face was regularly handsome, and the virtues of his mind shone in it; in his eyes tenderness

and vivacity were so happily mixed, that nothing could be more engaging or more animating at the same time. His manner was polite, delicate, and insinuating. I have already said enough of him to shew that his heart was perfectly amiable, his understanding was both great and agreeable; qualities that are not always found together, but were perfectly united in him. He was of great quality, and of high estimation in life, and enjoyed a most splendid fortune. With these titles to success, nothing but true love, which conquers mightier things than a lover's diffidence, enabled him to ask her leave to hope she would not return cruelty for the sincerest passion. He told her, that till he got courage enough to beg her to accept of a fortune so much better suited to her merit than what she had at present, he carefully concealed from her knowledge the love with which she inspired him, fearing any signs of it might create fears in her, which from some offences committed thro' ignorance, would not seem ill grounded; that the beginning of their acquaintance might give her a disadvantageous opinion of him, and he must own with some reason; that he had always conceived a great dislike to matrimony, from the little happiness he had seen in that state; that he had never before met with any woman whom he thought he could prefer to the whole sex; that he was extremely difficult in his choice of the objects of his affections; the person of one, the understanding of another, the heart of a third, the behaviour of a fourth, would remove prejudices he had at first received in their favour; that, till he saw her, he had never met with a woman to whom he could preserve the constancy which he looked
upon

upon as an indispensible duty, and the source of all happiness in wedlock; and till his every desire was thus centered in one, he had resolved never to enter into that state: that, the abhorrence he always had to the corrupting the principles and hurting the reputation of any woman, had, perhaps, been the occasion of his appearing a greater libertine than he really was; tho' he could not deny but he had been too much so: but that he should aspire at a great perfection, if she would give him hopes of curing him of his other faults as effectually, by letting him have her example constantly before him, as she had already done of that one. He added all that a violent passion could inspire, to prevail on her to give him hopes of yielding to his persuasions, with which her countenance did not greatly flatter him.

Cornelia had so great a regard for him, and thought herself under so many obligations to him, that nothing could have grieved her more than the discovery of so strong a passion, which could only give him pain, and make her appear ungrateful. After the appearances of a concern that surprized him, she told him, that by a declaration which would have made any other woman happy, he had given her the greatest uneasiness: that he had conferred the greatest of obligations on her, to which she was under a necessity of making an ungrateful return: that he deserved the heart of any woman, and could not fail of obtaining any that was not pre-engaged: she grieved to tell him, that hers was already in the possession of one whom she believed might be allowed to deserve her affection, as well as even himself; and better, she thought, no man
C 5 could:

could: that her love was all his, tho' possibly she might never see him again: she had nothing left to bestow but her friendship and esteem, both which she had in the highest degree, but were too small a return for what she owed him; she was sorry a man so capable of inspiring love should feel it for one who could not be sensible to it; but he must remove the uneasiness this might give him, by considering she did not deserve his affection; and that no woman was fit to be his wife, whose heart was not solely filled by his image.

Tho' this reception was the greatest shock Mr. De Rone could receive, yet he found his admiration and esteem increased by it. The constancy which could resist such temptations, and prefer a disagreeable way of life encompassed with difficulties, to one which promised her every thing that was desirable, must meet with admiration from a true lover; and he could not but reverence the purity and truth of her love, tho' he envied its object. He was too much affected to make her any answer. She employed all her endeavours to sooth his afflictions by a promise of inviolable friendship, and assurance of the highest esteem. She tried to prove to him, that a delicate mind might be happy with that return. He thanked her for her sentiments, and for her compassionate attention to him, and promised to use all the command he had over himself, to reduce his affection within such bounds as should enable him to be happy in her friendship, but that it must be done in absence, he would not grieve her generous heart by letting her know how much he suffered, and therefore would leave
Paris

Paris till he was able to see her without giving her pain.

This resolution he soon executed, wishing to indulge a melancholy he could not divert, and to overcome a passion which must be attended with misery.

Altho' Cornelia was concerned at the absence of one, for whom she had so much friendship, yet she was pleased with the hopes that it would cure his passion, and that in losing the lover, she might again find the friend. She continued to give all the assistance in her power to Madame Miteau, and to teach her to keep her affairs in that order, in which they had been put. This friendly care obliged her to be a good deal in the way of such as frequented the shop; she particularly saw Madame du Maine, an old lady who had long been a friend of Madame Miteau, and came much to her house. She was greatly pleased with Cornelia; and by the account her friend gave of her, and of the obligations she had laid her under, what was at first a favourite prejudice soon turned into esteem. She was very old, had quarrelled with two grand-children, who used to live with her; the grand-son for extravagance, and her grand-daughter for having married without her consent. The management of her estate and family was a very heavy burden at her time of life. The account she had of Cornelia's abilities, made her wish to prevail on her to come and live with her. She mentioned it to her, promising that she would expect nothing more from her, than that she should manage her affairs with the œconomy she so well understood; and that all the rest of her time should be entirely at her command: that she would not even

desire her to converse with her, but when her own inclination led her to it: that she should be on an equal footing with herself in the house, and be welcome to all her company; and that what appeared as a privilege might not prove an inconvenience, she offered her such an allowance as would enable her to appear properly with great ease.

As far as Cornelia had been able to observe, or could learn from others, Madam du Maine was a person of great understanding and merit. She was mistress of a great many virtues, and had no fault but too great strength of resentment, and a slowness in forgiving. If she was offended, she resented it highly, and seldom forgot it. But then she never was so without great provocation. Her offers could not meet with a refusal from Cornelia, who had indeed submitted with cheerfulness to spend her time in working, because it was necessary to her; but was glad to have a prospect of indulging herself in reading, for which she hoped she should have much time, as economy was a thing in which she was too skilful to find it a full employment. She could not but enjoy a great many leisure hours, as so few of hers were passed in sleep. Madame Miteau seemed so well disposed to follow the way she had put her into, that she left her with less regret, as she thought her assistance now unnecessary. The good woman and all her children were at a loss, but yet the pleasure of knowing her established in a way of life so much more comfortable, overcame in such of them as were old enough to reason, all selfish considerations.

Cornelia went as soon as it was agreed on to Madame Du Maine, who was delighted with the
ease

ease and assistance she found from her, and not less with the charms of her conversation. She was a woman of learning, sense, and taste, sufficient to relish Cornelia's understanding; and owned herself, however advanced in years, not too old to receive instruction from her. The benefit was not wholly of Madame Du Maine's side; Cornelia learned from her much of the customs of the world, of which she had hitherto been ignorant; and received all the advantages of a long experience, without having had the pain of going thro' it. The greatest part of her time passed in reading. She excused herself from appearing much in company, as it might endanger her being known; which she owned she had reason to be afraid of, tho' she would not reveal the occasion of her being obliged to conceal herself. She had not yet felt so perfect a friendship for any person, except Bernardo, as to make her think it a crime to conceal a thought; and the desire of trying the truth of his love, and whether he could remain constant without any hopes of ever having any fortune with her; and the fear that the resentment he might shew for the injuries she had received, might lead him into dangers, had prevented her imparting it even to him.

If one possessed with the most tender passion could be happy in the absence of the object of her love, Cornelia might have been so; her way of life was easy, and she received the greatest marks of esteem and friendship from Madame Du Maine. Cornelia had the pleasure of prevailing on her to employ part of her large fortune, according to the generosity and charity she used herself to practise; and with satisfaction saw, that she

she thereby cultivated the taste Madame Du Maine had for all good actions, and that she gave with her heart as well as with her hand. Cornelia had, from the first, taken every opportunity to insinuate something that might tend towards reconciling Madame du Maine to her grand-children; but she was so averse to it, that she even fixed upon Cornelia for her heir; and told her, that her death should shew how greatly she loved her; not that she would defer the proof of it till then; if Cornelia would give her an opportunity of gratifying her in any thing, she should find that she thought not half her fortune too much to give to one, who could make her enjoy the rest with ease and pleasure. She offered to fulfil this promise immediately, or if she chose a partner in the fortune, to consent to any match she liked, for she was sure she could not but choose wisely. She only begged her to live with her, make her old age happy by her conversation and friendship, and govern that house and estate, which she would settle on her at her death.

Cornelia expressed her gratitude in all the terms sincerity could dictate; but told her, that great as the temptation was, and she owned it very great to one in her situation, yet she could not accept of her offer; that she should ill requite her excessive goodness, if she could consent to her doing so wrong a thing as disinheriting her grand-children. She then added all the arguments she could think of, to bring her to forgive them; but after repeated trials, she could prevail no farther than to obtain her leave to bring her grand-daughter, Madame De Limon's child, to be bred up with her, if the mother appeared throughly to repent her disobedience.

She

She took an opportunity of representing to Madame De Limon, of how much importance it was to her, to take all methods of obtaining Madame du Maine's forgiveness. And letting her know what happy consequences would attend her submissions, and the little probability that she would not soon after be received herself, she disposed her to do all that was requisite on her part. Madame Du Maine, who loved her, and had never been able to conquer the grief the disobedience of her and her brother had given her, kept the promise she made to Cornelia, and took the child with pleasure. She soon grew so fond of it, as greatly assisted Cornelia's endeavours to persuade her to see the father and mother. Madame Du Maine at last consented, and was soon after prevailed upon to forgive her grand-son.

Cornelia soon found herself ill requited for the services she had done those, to whom she had restored the offered inheritance. Madame De Limon was possessed of a very narrow mind; she had no virtues of her own: nor had she understanding enough to see that in others, which she did not feel in herself: she had no acute sense but for her own interest: the consequences of a little mind and small understanding, are jealousy and suspicion. From the first moment she should have been sensible of her obligations to Cornelia, instead of feeling gratitude, she began to think it was dangerous to have a person near her grandmother, who had such an influence over her. Madame De Limon, after she came into the house, and saw how greatly Cornelia was esteemed and respected, had her fears heightened by the visible superiority nature had given that young lady over others. Fear soon produced hatred.

Madame

Madame De Limon wished what she thought for her own interest; and having a weak as well as a bad mind, had not cunning enough to hide her wishes.

Cornelia soon perceived that her presence was disagreeable; but as in what she had brought about, she had only aimed at doing justice, and contributing to Madame Du Maine's happiness, the satisfaction she received from the uprightness of her own actions, did not depend on Madame De Limon's behaviour; altho' that satisfaction might have been greatly heightened by the merit of the person for whom she had so generously laboured. However she could not be so indifferent about the behaviour of others, as not to find her situation very uneasy. Her honest heart could ill bear to be suspected of designs, of which she had demonstrated herself incapable to all the world. Madame De Limon, from her first growing uneasy, soon began to behave in a manner equally unbecoming her own rank and the obligations she had received. Her baseness and ingratitude prompted her to make the worst use of Cornelia's goodness, in not declaring the ill usage she met with. Madame De Limon took care to conceal her dislike before her grandmother, and let Cornelia feel the effects of her envy and malice, only in Madame Du Maine's absence. There was no impertinence Cornelia did not endure, nor any sort of lies Madame De Limon did not invent; that could possibly turn to Cornelia's disadvantage: but her whole conduct was so full a justification, that they met with no credit.

Mr. De Limon, whose invention was more extensive, and whose heart was rather worse than

than his wife's, prompted her to be more injurious than she would otherwise have been. He had married Mademoiselle Du Maine with a view of interest. She had no charms either of mind or person ; nor Mr. De Limon eyes to see them, had she been better endowed. His ruling passion was the love of money ; his thoughts and pursuits had never any other aim ; his understanding was governed by it, and his heart filled with it. His avarice naturally had little virtue to oppose it, but it had a task not less troublesome ; the concealing of many vices, in order to provide for it's own gratification. It had a bad temper to turn into the appearance of sweetness ; moroseness into complacency ; cruelty into compassion ; and, in short, its own self into generosity. The better to deceive, he appeared sincere ; and to gain the end he aimed at, knew how to counterfeit indifference for it. He had an understanding that qualified him for pleasing, and by his great attention, seldom failed of success. He insinuated himself into people's affections, by his approbation and encouragement of their worst passions. He well knew how much men were governed by them, and the pleasure they took in being flattered, even in things for which, upon reflexion, they could not help reproaching themselves.

But as his only aim was to do himself service, he little valued the pernicious consequences of his flattery. By such arts he first obtained admission into Madame Du Maine's house, and then into her grand-daughter's heart ; without any one having the least suspicion of his intention. For he used as much artifice to convince every one else, that he was indifferent to Mademoiselle Du
Maine,

Maine, as to persuade her she had inspired him with the most violent passion.

It is very easy to imagine, that the favour Cornelia was in with Madame Du Maine, would give umbrage to one of such a character, whose selfishness made him suspicious and watchful. He endeavoured by all the means he could invent to remove her from his grandmother. But as it was not in the power of envy to see a fault in Cornelia, nor of malice and falsehood to make her be believed guilty of one, the only way by which he could hope to succeed, was to give her reason to chuse a change, by making her very uneasy in her present situation. And indeed he took such sure methods, that she determined to give up the way of life that 'till then had made her so happy, rather than endure the suspicions and fears she saw they were filled with, and the behaviour that was the consequence of them.

The great difficulty she was under, was, the manner in which she should declare her intention to Madame Du Maine; who loved her too well to part easily with her. Cornelia feared the quickness of the lady's discernment might make her guess at the occasion of such a resolution, which must otherwise appear so strange to one who had so kindly done all that lay in her power to make her happy. The fear she had lest her generous friend should believe her insensible or ungrateful to so much goodness, added greatly to the pain she felt at the thoughts of parting with the person she was most obliged to, and for whom she had the greatest esteem and affection. But all these difficulties could not prevail on her to remain where she saw such injurious suspicions entertained concerning her,
by

by persons who had the greatest reasons to esteem her. In consequence of her resolution, the one day summoned all her courage and command of herself, to inform Madame Du Maine of her intention.

She began, by begging her to let nothing she was going to say raise the least notion in her, that she was not deeply affected with the highest gratitude, for the unparalleled favours she had received from her ; or doubt her being touched with a most disinterested affection for her merits ; for therein she would, for the first time in her life, do an injustice. ‘ With you, Madam,’ said she, ‘ I found a refuge from all my misfortunes ; and enjoyed ease and plenty, with the additional happiness of the friendship you honoured me with. I am sensible that by leaving you, I must be exposed again to many of the difficulties from which you preserved me ; but yet I must beg your permission to forsake all I enjoy from your goodness, and what will be my greatest loss, your conversation. I would beg to keep my place in your esteem, and to have the honour of seeing you, when your leisure and opportunity will allow you to admit me. I hope for your forgiveness, as I am sure if you saw all that passes in my heart, you would know me to be an object of pity, not of anger. If my services could be of use to you, gratitude ought, and affection would, fix me here. But in Madame De Limon you have an assistant in all business, and one who will with pleasure relieve you from all the disagreeable attentions, in the government of your estate and family. If at any time further assistance is wanting, the greatest satisfaction I can receive will be to serve you ;

you; and my first wish will always be for the happiness of a benefactress, to whom I owe every good I have enjoyed, and whose heart allotted me all that generosity can give; but made me the most valuable present, in giving me so great a share of its own inestimable affections.'

Madame Du Maine had been too quick-sighted to be deceived, by the specious behaviour of her grand-children in her presence. She had found out how very ill they used Cornelia on all occasions; but knew not how to prevent it, without taking such measures as would oblige her to undo all she had done in their favour. Sensible of the unworthy treatment Cornelia had received, Madame Du Maine admired, instead of blaming, so honest and just a pride; but was not willing to lose the most worthy object of her affection, for the sake of those so much inferior in merit; and therefore she determined to do her utmost to avoid what she could not but look on as a great misfortune. 'My dear Cornelia,' said she, 'though you have not told me the reason of your wishing to leave me, yet I believe I am no stranger to it. I have been informed of the inexcusable behaviour of the persons who are the most obliged to you of any in the world; and you may be sure am not insensible to their ingratitude; the effects of which I doubt not I should myself experience, did not selfishness keep the other vice from appearing. But they have mistaken their aim, and shall find that the means they take to obtain what they aim at, shall turn to their disappointment. Had Monsieur and Madame De Limon shewn that friendship and gratitude which your incomparable generosity deserved from them, their fortune would have received

received no greater diminution than of a few thousand pounds, which I should have thought a small reward for your friendship, and a small return for what you so nobly refused. But since they want to deprive you of me, out of a truly despicable fear of my leaving you too great a share of a fortune they knew they would never have partaken of, but for the manner in which you used the esteem you had given me for you; they shall find, that merit has stronger ties with me than blood. Yet I will use them better than they would me. Money is their greatest happiness; your company is mine. They would deprive me of all, but I them only of part. My fortune I will divide between you; but my house you only shall share whilst I live: if they will make it disagreeable to you, they shall remain no longer in it.

Cornelia, though charmed with her friendship, yet had too much generosity to acquiesce in it; and begged her not to misconstrue in her grandchildren a jealousy, which, though carried too far, might be looked upon as a virtue, since it must proceed from their love. That they had experienced too much of her, to fear she would deprive them of the inheritance they had a right to expect; and that their jealousy could only be of a competitor in their grandmother's heart. She begged therefore, that Madame Du Maine, would not give her the mortification of having been the cause of any disagreement between her and Madame de Limon, but permit her to leave them in amity. She insisted so much on this, and begged it so earnestly, that Madame Du Maine agreed to try all the means she could of altering their behaviour; by letting them know

know she was sensible of what was past, and how much she resented it. This, though it increased their hatred and fears, made them conceal both as much as they could.

Soon after, they all went to make a visit to a relation of theirs, who had often been at Madame Du Maine's, and had shewn so great an inclination towards Cornelia, as made her desirous not to be of the party. Her heart was so entirely engaged to Bernardo, that the addresses of all other men were extremely disagreeable to her. But Madame Du Maine desiring her to go, and Monsieur and Madame Du Limon pressing her to accompany them, she could not in civility refuse it.

The gentleman they went to was a widower; his name, Monsieur De Rhèe: his castle had been a very fine one. Time and the civil wars had robbed it of a great deal of its beauty, though not of its magnificence. At this place they spent near a month very agreeably. Monsieur De Rhèe took all possible care to furnish them with variety of amusements. Cornelia was the only person discontented: his continual solicitations being a constant trouble to her. He became a most ardent lover; and greatly piqued at the indifference he found she had for him; instead of being grieved on finding no return to his love, he was enraged at not meeting with what his vanity made him think his due.

Monsieur De Rhèe was of a hot fiery temper, proud of the antient splendor of his family, and vain of his own endowments; he had some sense, and a great deal of wit; but one was as much exceeded by the strength of his passions, as the other was by his conceit of it. His sense be-
came

came useless towards regulating his conduct, and his wit was deprived of the power of pleasing. Whatever he undertook, he pursued with violence; till some new thing, by its novelty, struck his fancy, and changed the chace. The eagerness was always the same, though the object varied. No difficulties, no hazards stopped him. The instant any thing appeared desirable, it became necessary, till some other necessity of the same kind made him forget the former. Spurred on by passion, and guided by prejudice, his actions and opinions were equally variable, and inconsistent with reason. With all this, when he enjoyed a calm and quiet state of mind (which indeed was seldom lasting) he was generous and good-humoured. His face was handsome, and his person well made. These, with his vivacity, made him thought agreeable by many accustomed to be well received by the fair sex. He did not know how to bear Cornelia's coldness. Monsieur and Madame De Limon omitted nothing to pique his vanity, and encrease his love and his resentment. He, at last, became so tormenting to Cornelia, that Madame Du Maine determined to return home, to free her from such disagreeable persecutions.

Accordingly the day was fixed, notwithstanding all the opposition; politeness and love could raise in Monsieur De Rhée. When Madame Du Maine awaked, in the morning appointed for their departure, she sent her servant to enquire after the health of Cornelia, who had gone to bed somewhat indisposed the night before. But how great was her surprize, when her servant brought her back word, that she could not find her in the house, or garden, and that her box and clothes were

were all missing. This alarming account raised various apprehensions in Madame Du Maine's mind, all equally painful to her kind and friendly heart. She rose with all possible haste, and went to make what enquiry she could; but learned nothing to fix her thoughts. All she heard, was, that the servants, upon their first coming down in the morning, found one of the doors open which used to be bolted. Monsieur De Rhée entered into all Madame Du Maine's intentions of inquiry, and sent servants of his own, with hers, in search of Cornelia. He was so much moved with her loss, he would have gone himself, had they not strongly persuaded him against it.

The constructions that were put on this accident, were various. Most people seemed to imagine she had run away, and attributed it to all the reasons that such flights ever proceed from. Monsieur and Madame De Limon embraced the most injurious opinions; but Madame Du Maine had so true an esteem for her, that such insinuations moved her anger and her scorn, instead of her belief. She could not for a moment suspect her of taking such a step. She had experienced the strongest proofs of her attachment, confidence, friendship, and prudence; and could not therefore harbour a thought of her doing any thing inconsistent with either. She knew the dispositions of her grand-children, and of Monsieur De Rhée towards her. His love, and his resentment, and violence of temper, filled her mind with every fear. In this perplexed and anxious state of mind, she continued three days, that they were making strict enquiries after Cornelia. When nothing farther could be done, she resolved

solved to go home ; thinking it the most likely place to hear of any distresses her friend might be in. Madame Du Maine returned with a very heavy heart : her thoughts were filled with fears of the most dreadful evils, that might happen to the person who had been the comfort and relief of her age, whom she loved and admired, and would have given her life to have secured in peace and safety.

It is time now to return to Cornelia ; whose situation was not less terrible, than her patroness's affrighted imagination had represented it to be. Having gone to bed indisposed, and not being able to sleep, she got up, and putting on her morning dress, sat and read, till she thought her mind more composed and likely to take a little rest : that she might indulge it the longer next day, she lay down in her cloaths. In the midst of the night she was awakened by the unlocking of a closet door, which she had never before seen opened ; and had been told it was filled with Monsieur De Rhée's papers. In an instant three men appeared at her bed-side, and threatened her with death, if she uttered the least cry, or made any difficulty of going along with them. But as she could not foresee any consequence of her silence, more eligible than what they menaced her with ; she began to try, by crying out, and ringing her bell, to bring some one to her assistance. But she no sooner attempted it, than they stopped her mouth with a handkerchief, and bound her hands, so that she could no longer make any resistance. The terror of finding herself defenceless, in the power of people she knew could only mean her ill, so far overcame her strength of mind, that she lost

all sense. In that condition they carried her off, and every thing belonging to her likewise: omitting nothing that might give the least appearance of her having taken a voluntary flight. One of the men put her before him on a horse, and with the rest, rode with all the speed that the incumbrance of his lifeless burthen would permit. She did not recover from her first swoon till after they had gone some miles; and then only opened her eyes to shut them again, in the same temporary death.

Thus they travelled till near day-light, when they put her into a chariot which met them for that purpose. One of the men got into it with her, and by keeping the canvasses up, prevented passengers from being moved by so melancholy a spectacle. Day-light had in part abated her terrors, and she was restored to her senses, but only to suffer more pain, by all the dreadful thoughts that crowded on her. Her last fit was no sooner over, than she burst into a flood of tears, and could not restrain them long enough to enquire to what fate she was destined. She entertained some hope of making her escape, by the assistance of such whose pity she might move at the first inn, where they should take refreshment. Great was the addition to her misery, when she found all possible precautions had been taken to make that needless. About the middle of the day they stopped in a wood, and presented her with provision they had brought with them, ready prepared; begged she would suspend her grief, and partake of their repast. She refused their offer; but asked for such things as could not be had without carrying her to some place where they might have been prepared. They told

told her, they were ordered not to stop at any house till they came to their journey's end. She begged to know what was to become of her. They tried to moderate her grief, by promising her all that Monsieur De Rhée's love could invent for her entertainment, or administer to her happiness. It was no relief to her to know she was in his power. She had before entertained some suspicion that Monsieur and Madame De Limon had taken these violent means to remove her from Madame Du Maine ; and however terrible this reflection was, it was much less so, than the thought of being exposed to the furious passion of Monsieur De Rhée. She found herself deprived of all hopes of escaping, when she observed that the coming of night did not stop their travelling.

Before day-break they stopped, and told her she was at her journey's end, and with all precautions against her making any noise, carried her into a house, which they told her was Monsieur de Rhée's. She was put into one of those rooms, not uncommonly found in old castles, where the owner may lie concealed, in case intestine feuds and commotions, or other occasions, made it necessary. She soon found herself out of the hearing of any one ; the little light she had, came in by the top of the room, which had so much the air of a prison, as would have raised terrors in a mind much less occupied by its own anticipating imagination. The only servant that came near her, was an elderly woman, of a very displeasing countenance, in which were painted ill-nature and avarice. Her behaviour, and the sentiments she discovered, did not contradict those outward signs.

Cornelia was, during four days, agreeably surpris'd at not seeing Monsieur De Rhée. But when she had recovered her spirits enough to ask for a book, the old woman told her, she would not long be without company; for that her master would entertain her much better by his conversation, than books could do. Unaccustomed to take much sleep, and now less inclin'd to it than ever, with neither objects nor books to amuse the melancholy of her mind, she found the hours, that used to appear so much too short for her, grown terribly tedious. In this weariness of mind she had recourse to her pen and ink, which, with all necessary materials for writing, were brought among her things. Her employment was to write her thoughts on several subjects as they occurred to her. These were but melancholy, though she had chosen them out of the least shocking that possessed her mind, in hopes of drawing some comfort from them. By writing these essays she was a little amus'd; and by fixing her hope on the goodness of God, and her comfort in virtue, which gives more happiness to the distressed than the vicious feel in their prosperity, she by degrees found more composure of mind. But it was soon destroyed by the appearance of Monsieur De Rhée.

His absence has already been accounted for by Madame Du Maine's stay at his house, after the loss of Cornelia. He was no sooner at liberty, than he repaired with all speed to the castle where she was confined. His entrance into the room at once put an end to all the benefit she had reaped from her own reflections. Indignation and terror were spread over her countenance. Before she had power to speak, he

he fell on his knees, begged her to forgive what his love had caused, expatiated on the impossibility of living absent from her ; or present, if exposed to her scorn ; and made use of all the arguments that could be drawn from the excess of love, to entitle him to pardon. But Cornelia, who could not consider a passion as love, when its name was not the happiness of the object it was placed on, told Monsieur De Rhée, he had better rise, than remain on his knees till she forgave him ; that she was not so easily imposed on by an humble posture, as to forgive the violence he had used ; which was as little consistent with humility, as the making her miserable was with love ; that she considered his behaviour as the effect of a haughty and impetuous temper, and that she could not wish for any proof of his love, because she could not return it. She only desired, that he would shew himself not totally void of honour and humanity ; and if he wished for her esteem, which was all she had to give, he must shew himself worthy of it ; and not expect gratitude where resentment only was due.

Of all the various characters love could make Monsieur De Rhée assume, that of a suppliant was the last : he well knew the impetuosity of a lover, but little of his humility. He had been encouraged by his own wishes, and the opinion of Monsieur and Madame De Limon, to hope that the confinement Cornelia was in, would abate her rigour. He believed prudence would make her appear to approve his love ; and he did not doubt but if she would once listen to him, inclination would take the place of prudence.

dence. He was no less surpris'd than exasperated, when he found the civility, with which she always treated him, turned into anger, and indifference into disdain. This disappointment, however, made him resolve to lay aside any farther entreaties at that time; and try whether his assiduity and charms might not conquer the heart that had hitherto refused to yield.

There was no kind of behaviour she did not experience from him. He must have pleased a woman who delighted in variety; for he was all lovers in one. Sometimes insolent in his resentments; at others, presuming in his love; at times tender and passionate, melancholy and despairing; at others, lively, entertaining and good humoured. He spent the greatest part of the day with her, furnished her with books to amuse her in his absence; and when the darkness of the evening gave her the liberty of walking, without danger of being seen, he would insist on her going with him; fearing that want of air and exercise, joined with vexation, might impair her health; which had in some measure suffered already, though she was supported by great natural strength of constitution. As thro' all his variety of passions he had shewn none that could alarm her virtue, she grew easier, whilst he was trying all ways to gain her heart. She found him a greater slave to his passions than she was to him, and was sure they were the worse tyrants. Pity abated her resentment; and she hoped by coldness to gain a liberty, which out of anger he might deprive her of, if she shewed too plainly the sense she had of his behaviour.

Their

Their conversation thus grew more easy, and in the length of time they passed together, it turned on a great variety of subjects : his love, instead of being lessened, was increased by it. He saw more of her perfections, saw more reason than ever to be charmed with her disposition, and astonished at her understanding and learning. He frequently pressed her to marry him ; she as constantly refused ; telling him, that she would never marry a man whom she could not love : how could she enter into a state, wherein she promised to love, without being sure she could fulfil it ? that, in her opinion, all promises were binding, and this one more particularly so, since her own, her husband's, and, in great measure, the happiness of a whole family depended upon it : that she had no reason to have a bad opinion of her own heart ; hitherto she had found her duty and inclination very consistent, but that would not encourage her to venture upon an union that would set them at variance ; tho' she hoped she would always do right, yet she would not bring upon herself any temptation to do wrong ; that, for her part, she did not think she could perform all the duties of a wife, as she ought, unless she loved her husband : and therefore she was determined, out of regard to her own ease of mind and his happiness, never to undertake so difficult a task.

His passion was too strong to suffer him to approve the reasons of this refusal, any more than the arguments she used to shew him how little satisfaction he could have in being united to a woman whose affections he did not possess. His passion had more of violence than delicacy in it ; he thought of no refinements, nor to be pleased

wanted to know that the pleasure was mutual. She had, in vain, used all arguments to induce him to grant her her liberty, and all means to abate his love, but equally without success. She began to despair of getting from him, and to fear every thing from being with him, convinced he could not persist in keeping her a prisoner, without being determined to make all possible use of it for his own gratification. He, far from removing her fears, often let his anger break forth in obscure threats, and advised her to be induced to better usage, by considering how much she was in his power. The anxiety, which for a time had been pretty well removed, returned again with double force ; all her thoughts were turned towards finding out some way to escape, not being quite discouraged with the appearance of impossibility.

She tried the disposition of the only servant that came near her, but found him not likely to be moved by pity, or virtue, from doing what he thought was for his interest. He could not believe that assisting her would ever be more advantageous to him than his compliance with his master. He told Monsieur de Rhée the attempts she had made to prevail on him to betray his trust. It greatly exasperated this imperious lover : he reproached her with ingratitude, for the consideration with which he had treated her. She told him, she could not acknowledge as a favour, a man's not using her as ill as possible ; that he had imprisoned her, and then expected that a few civilities, mixed with a brutal behaviour, should make her forget the irreparable injury he did her, in taking away her liberty, her ease of mind, and removing her from the best

best of friends. To liberty she had a natural right ; she might be deprived of the enjoyment of it, but never of her title to it, which she should assert whenever she should have it in her power ; and therefore, if he had either generosity, love, or the least desire for her esteem, he would rather let her enjoy her freedom by his gift, than by her own procurement ; and that if she received it from him, he would then cancel all he had made her suffer ; but if she obtained it without him, she should leave him with a heart full of resentment, scorn and hatred. He laughed at her supposition, that she could find any other way of getting from him than what he should furnish her with. The room where she lodged was too well secured on the outside, to leave any possibility of her escape. The more she thought of it, the greater her despair grew ; but at length one evening came that gave her a glimmering of hope.

Monsieur de Rhée had brought her out to walk by the light of a very bright moon ; when they were in a little inclosed spot of ground, from whence he saw she could not get out, he left her to go and examine whether all the windows were shut that looked into the part of the garden where he had a mind to carry her. He was scarce gone before she perceived a young woman not far from her, walking towards the house. Cornelia ran to her, fell on her knees, told her she was confined in that house, and begg'd her assistance for her delivery out of it. The young woman was so astonished with the adventure, and seeing so beautiful a creature at her feet, that she could not answer her. Cornelia took the opportunity of her silence, to relate the

manner in which she came there, the treatment she met with, and the terror in which she lived ; all in the most moving manner, mingling her tears with her entreaties for her assistance. Young Maria was moved extremely ; she had a tender disposition, and knew how to feel for others. She wished to have the power of relieving Cornelia from her sufferings ; but told her, as she was so close a prisoner, she knew not how to effect it. She enquired where Monsieur de Rhé was. Cornelia told her ; and likewise, that she was sometimes left by him a quarter of an hour, or more, in that spot, as he looked on it to be the most secure place wherein he could quit her, if any thing called him away. All they could then do, was to agree to meet there, whenever Cornelia was left alone ; and in the mean time, to think of all the means to contrive her escape, and consult upon it ; Maria promising to watch every night for her coming. She had got out of sight but just before Monsieur de Rhé appeared ; who found Cornelia less melancholy than he had left her, or than he had lately seen her. They walked a long time ; her conversation was less constrained than usual, and he was more than ever unwilling to break it off. However, finding she grew weary, he conducted her to her apartment, and with regret left her. The rest of the night she spent in forming schemes for freeing herself from her prison.

The next evening Monsieur de Rhé again used all arguments and entreaties to induce her to marry him. But finding her as inexorable as ever, his passion being heightened by despair, he assured her she should see how little cruelty availed his prisoner ; for that force should give him,

him what her consent would not. And he began to treat her with great familiarity; threatening to kill her, if she did not forbear resistance. She told him, that the fulfilling his menaces would be the greatest blessing she ever hoped to receive: that she looked on death as her deliverer, and would joyfully meet the sword he intended should frighten her: that in the happiest part of her life, she could never have been mean enough to have preserved it by the loss of her honour: and that it would be strange indeed, if, under her present misfortunes, she should be so poorly fond of it. When he found his threats had no power, he was determined to overcome her weakness, tho' no danger could conquer her courage. She knew herself very unequal to him, and fearful that her resistance must prove vain in time, she resolved to try other methods of saving herself. She conjured him to have pity upon her; to have pity on himself, and not load his conscience with a crime, for which it must bitterly upbraid him. She urged all the ties of virtue, religion, and honour: but he was deaf to all, and at that time was sensible of nothing but his brutal passion. Finding her strength was her only dependance, she exerted it to the utmost, broke from him, and with the quickness of lightning flew towards her closet. Fortunately for her, De Rhée's foot slipped as he made an effort to follow and seize her, and his falling with some violence gave her time to lock and bar the door.

There she fainted away. He could, thro' the key-hole, see her stretched on the ground, and in appearance dead. This sight brought back his tenderness, which had been turned into violence and desperation. At that moment he wished to

get in only to assist her; but to attempt it was vain; he called to her, entreated her to return to life, as if she could have heard him, and had the power of complying with his request. He stamped and raved, cursed himself, his passion, and his fate; in short, in the fury of his madness, he made so great a clamour, as brought his trusty servant to him; but it was not in his power to relieve or pacify him. Cornelia continued in that condition for some hours, and as his fear that she was really dead, increased with the length of time she appeared to be so, his rage increased in proportion, till at length he perceived some signs of returning life. This quieted his madness. His anxiety in watching her recovery, and the fear of alarming her by his voice, made him observe in silence the returning of the blood to her lips, then the beginning of motion, and, at last, the return of sense; but he soon perceived that was no blessing to her, for without rising from the ground, she burst into a flood of tears, accompanied with sighs that moved him extremely, and made him see, that whilst unanimated, she was less to be pitied than in her present grief. He ventured to speak to her, begged for forgiveness, and promised never more to offend her, and now entreated her as fervently as she had before done him, in a better cause. This roused her from her lethargy of grief; and she told him, she wondered he could ask for mercy from her, after having so inhumanly denied it to her, when her prayers and tears could not bring him to virtue for one moment. Did he hope she could be so easily moved to stifle a just resentment? She could neither pity nor esteem him; he had deserved her hate, and had obtained it.

She

She advised him to repent so sincerely as to amend; to controul passions that now got the better of every good principle in him, or fear every misery that a man blinded to reason and virtue could fall into. This advice she gave him for his own sake; as for her, she had nothing to do with any future amendments; she knew him too bad, to expect them time enough for her preservation; his promises she could as little trust to: how could she believe a man in whom she had found no regard for either honour or truth? She had once happily escaped his brutality, but as the same blessing might not be always granted her, she would never put herself in the same danger; that she was bound in duty to preserve her life, but was obliged by ties, not less strong, to preserve her innocence. If duties thus disagreed, the lesser must be given up. In dying, her virtue was for ever safe; in preferring life, she must expect to lose the other, in hopes of prolonging an odious and precarious existence. She told him, she was firmly resolved; therefore desired he would leave her in peace, and be content with having shortened her life, without depriving her of quiet during the small time it had to last.

Tho' he believed this was only the effect of the violent agitation of her mind, and that as soon as it was a little abated, she would lay all such thoughts aside; yet he could not forbear trying to hasten that calm, by giving her all the assurance of future safety that words could express. He declared how much he detested himself for his attempt, and how glad he was that she escaped it; adding every thing he thought might plead for his forgiveness or excuse. She made him no answer: wrapt up in her own reflexions,
she

she scarce heard what he said. Every moment strengthened her resolution of remaining where she was. Could she have got sustenance without removing her defence, she would have preferred that closely imprisoned state, to the putting an end to her life by a refusal of all assistance. She could not hope to receive any thing unaccompanied by Monsieur De Rhée. His admittance must be a necessary consequence of her opening the door, and expose her to all former dangers, from a man made still more desperate by her resistance.

A day and half passed thus, during which Monsieur De Rhée never ceased using all means to prevail on her to change her resolution. When he despaired of success, he told her, that tho' he could have been glad to have kept her being with him a secret, he had now given up all thoughts of it, and should instantly order some men to enter her closet by the sky-light, unless she would voluntarily leave it, and thereby bind him to her by the strongest obligations. His menaces had not the effect he expected. If she was doomed to live there, she chose that it should become publick, and wished to see the men that were to drive her from her sanctuary. She therefore persisted in her refusal. And he was forced to execute what he had mentioned. Accordingly it was not long before she saw two men just over her room, who got down into it, and began to remove the bar, and to unlock the door. She addressed them with all the eagerness that the anxiety of her mind gave her; she begged, she entreated them to put a letter into the post for Madame Du Maine, if they would do nothing greater towards the assistance of the most miserable

able of women. Tho' the men seemed touched with her appearance, it conduced little to her benefit, the fear of Monsieur De Rhée forcing them to appear obdurate, whatever they might be in reality. When they opened the door, he who had been waiting impatiently at the outside of it, came in. He tried to sooth her grief and quiet her fears; but she was too much overcome by them to be easily relieved. He had some broths, and such things as he thought most proper for one who had fasted so long, brought to her, and prevailed upon her to eat a little. The many pardons he begged for his late behaviour, the respect he shewed her, the protestations he made of always continuing the same, and never more relapsing into his former faults, gave her some room to hope, that his sentiments, which then seemed good, might remain so a little time; and that before his unruly passions got the better of them, she might, by the charitable assistance of Maria, find means of making her escape. He continued his endeavours to reconcile Cornelia to him, and shewed the fondest anxiety lest her health should have been impaired by what she had suffered; and, at length, he obtained her consent to renew their former way of life.

The evening of the day after she had been driven out of her little fortress, they walked in the gardens. She had written what she desired Maria to do for her; which was, if she possibly could, to get a man and horses for himself and for Cornelia, to wait every night at the most convenient place for her to meet him; that she would reward him greatly; so well that he should never be obliged to return into that country again,

again, if he feared Monsieur De Rhée's anger. She desired he would buy the horses as secretly as possible, and inclosed money enough to pay for them. She added, that she should think herself eternally obliged to Maria, if, after she had settled the above-mentioned affair, she would then let her thro' that door by which Maria used to go into the house; and put her into the right way to find the man and horses: that Monsieur De Rhée would not suspect any thing of the escape, nor give the alarm immediately, so that Maria by putting herself into bed, might avoid the suspicion of having been an assistant: that it was needless to say any thing more to prove the necessity of secrecy in this affair: that if Maria found, after a thorough search, that no one was to be got who would undertake to be her guide, she then begged her to put into the post a letter inclosed, which was to inform Madame Du Maine where she was, and what she suffered.

As ready as she had got her instructions, she was not much nearer departing; for notwithstanding the diligence she had used, three nights passed before she had an opportunity of speaking to Maria. However, the fourth, Monsieur De Rhée disappeared, Cornelia gave her the paper, and she again returned to her concealment, till she could safely go back into the house. Cornelia now felt the pleasure of hope, to which she had been long a stranger; this night and the next day were the happiest she had felt for some time past. The flattering expectation of getting out of a place so justly dreaded and detested by her, filled her with joy seldom felt by those who have lived constantly in prosperity.
But

But yet this joy was interrupted by fear and anxiety, lest her attempt should not succeed.

Two nights passed before she was left alone. The watchful Maria then told her, in few words, she had got a man who would undertake to be her guide, and now only waited to get horses and necessary equipments; as it was uncertain how soon they might be got, she advised her to be constantly prepared for going off at the shortest warning; and told her, she would not meet her again till every thing was ready for her escape, as it was best not unnecessarily to run the hazard of being discovered. This Cornelia agreed to, with many thanks for the joyful account she had given her.

Monsieur De Rhée found the agreeable effects of it; for it gave her a flow of spirits that he had not seen her in since she was at his castle. As his vanity made him always ready to hope, he conceived some from this return of vivacity. He imagined from it that he was become less disagreeable to her, tho' she must have seen plainer than ever, that he did not mean to give her her liberty, since the despair he had beheld her in could not prevail so far upon him. Four days dragged on heavily for her before she was left a moment alone in the garden. Her impatience grew very painful to her, and her spirits began to sink again by such a succession of disappointments. However, at last, the wished-for night came. Monsieur De Rhée thought he heard some people at a distance in the garden, fearing, that what was in fact only an attempt to steal fruit, might be aimed at delivering Cornelia, whom Madame Du Maine's suspicions might perhaps guess was there. He left her, and whilst he went to discover what the noise proceeded from, Maria came immediately to Cornelia, and telling her every thing was ready for her escape,

cape, as it had been for three nights past, guided her to the door.

Cornelia made her a more considerable present than was suitable to her present circumstances ; but she could better bear to be without money, than even to appear to be without gratitude. She told her she should soon give her farther proofs how much she thought herself obliged, and begged that whenever she could be of the least service to her in any way, she would let her know, and she should esteem it a new obligation, to give her an opportunity of shewing the sense she had of, and making some kind of recompence for, the former ; an equal return she hoped Maria would never stand in need of, but whatever it was, she should not fail to shew her time could not efface gratitude, or make her think she could ever sufficiently repay what she had done for her ; she owed her more than life, it was therefore but a small return to offer her all the services of it, whenever she would do her the favour to employ her. There was time for little more to pass between them, before they had reached the road, wherein, tho' at some distance, Cornelia's horses stayed for her. Here they took leave, each went on their way with equal speed, one to keep clear from being suspected, and the other to get away from that detestable house as quick as possible.

She soon found her horses ; and mounted hers directly, telling the man to ride on with the utmost speed, and on the first opportunity to turn into a by-road, in hopes of being the sooner concealed from any search Monsieur De Rhée might make after her. The night was not a dark one, and yet not so light as to endanger their being seen at a distance. By break of day

day they were arrived at a town above twenty five miles from the Chateau De Rhée, unable to travel any farther in so fatiguing a manner, without rest, for which her fears would not allow her time. She took a post-chaise, and going near twenty miles in that, after half an hour's refreshment, got on her horse again, and proceeded about ten farther in a by-road, which brought them to a little village, where she determined to stay. She thought she could not find a place more fit for the concealment that was necessary to her. It was built in a deep valley, and great part of it was encompassed with a wood. It was so little to be seen from the road, that the guide could not have found it, if he had not been once carried there by his father, who was bred up in it.

Her first thought was to endeavour to get a lodging; which she did with an old woman, whom her guide told her had the reputation of being quiet and honest. It differed much from what she had ever yet lived in. The cottage was a very poor one, and her chamber would but just hold her bed, a chair, and a table. But as her mind was not contracted with her habitation, she felt no uneasiness from the size and meanness of it. She looked on it as an asylum from the worst of evils. What would have rendered it agreeable to any one, was the wood near which it stood. Thro' this wood ran a clear murmuring-rivulet, which with the great variety of birds, that seemed, like her, to take refuge there from their persecutors, made a most delightful harmony, most of all pleasing to persons, possessed with a tender passion, who naturally love the soothing murmurs of a rivulet gentle as their own souls, and the musick of the birds, who seem to spend their lives in love.

As

As soon as she had got a little rest, of which she stood in great need, she called for the man that came with her, designing to employ him farther, if his capacity answered the opinion she had received of him from the quickness and discretion with which he had assisted her escape. She found he was a poor labourer, and that in the province he had left, they were over-stocked with such, therefore he was glad of an opportunity of trying his fortune in other places. He answered all she asked him with a great deal of sense. This encouraged her to tell him, that as soon as he had sufficiently rested himself, after his fatigue, she had a message for him, which would carry him a good long journey, but would give her the means of rewarding him in some measure directly: that all he would have to do, would be to deliver a letter into such hands as she should direct him; to stay at a house near till he had an answer, and to take care that he did not let slip one word, which could give the least suspicion from whence or from whom he came, nor that he had lately taken any uncommon journey. He promised to obey her orders, and told her, he should be ready to set out the next morning.

As she wished to relieve Madame Du Maine from the uneasiness she knew she must be under, and to have her advice as soon as possible, she began immediately to prepare his dispatches. She first told Madame Du Maine how much she should offend against the gratitude she owed her, if she did not seize the first moment to let her know she was in health and safety; as she could not doubt but her usual goodness had made her very uneasy on her account, it would be no less inconsistent

inconsistent with her regard and affection, to delay sending her word what had occasioned an absence that might have hurt her in her good opinion, which of all things was most essential to her happiness; when affection for the best of friends, and self-love join in the same desire, the gratification will be impatiently sought for. She then related all that had happened to her since their separation, gave an account of the place she was at, and begged her advice as to what she should do henceforward. She cautioned her not to let the least hint of her escape reach the ears of Monsieur and Madame De Limon, or any one else but the person to whom she should enclose the letters. She told her that as she had received many favours from her, and had had the most pressing offers of more, she was encouraged to beg, that instead of the kind intentions she had had for her, she would be so kind to settle an annuity of twenty pounds per annum on the man who had ventured so much for her deliverance. This would make her very happy, as it would acquit her towards him of the obligation she had to him, and she could never again want money so much as now, to enable her to make such an acknowledgment. She made very circumstantial enquiries, after Madame Du Maine's health: and begged a speedy answer. This she inclosed to that lady's woman, who she knew loved her too well not to be rejoiced to hear of her, and to be as secret as she could wish.

The next morning her peasant Moullant set out with it, promising to use his utmost diligence in his journey. She had passed herself off in the village for a farmer's daughter, and Moullant for his servant; and that upon her mother-in-law's using

using her ill, he had sent her to be out of the way, till he had determined what to do with her. The enjoyment of liberty, ease, and tranquillity, might have been sufficient to make one happy who had been kept so long in the cruellest captivity, and had lived in grief and terror. And her habitation had great charms for her, and she would have felt a constant joy, had she had Bernardo with her. She would then have possessed her utmost wish, and could have been well pleased to have lived for ever in that obscurity and solitude. But his absence embittered all her pleasures. She did but half enjoy liberty, as it could not procure her a sight of him; and solitude lost its tranquillity, when she reflected on the alterations absence might have made in his heart. However, unlike most people in her situation, she did not indulge melancholy reflections; and thereby suffered less pain than many give themselves: for when her own thoughts were gloomy and unpleasant, she had recourse to those of others, and amused herself by reading.

But we must leave her in her cottage, and accompany her messenger to Madame Du Maine's, where he delivered his letter with all possible circumspection. She who had remained in the utmost anxiety, and now began to despair of Cornelia's being alive, could not but be raised to the highest excess of joy at receiving a token of her safety. She opened the letter with extreme impatience. The contents of it moved her greatly: she wept for the misery Cornelia had endured; and wept tears of joy for her being freed from it. She felt by turns every passion. Joy and grief filled her mind alternately. It was long before she was calm enough

enough to consider the advice required of her, but desirous of complying with her request, that the messenger might have his answer soon, she brought herself to the necessary composure as soon as possible, and wrote the following letter.

My dear Cornelia,

‘ **I** T is impossible to express the joy I received
‘ from the sight of your hand. I had given
‘ myself up to despair of ever hearing any more of
‘ my dearest child, and could not help fearing I
‘ had been in some measure the cause of the mis-
‘ fortunes that had befallen you, who had given me
‘ more happiness than I can ever now receive. I
‘ was transported to find the fear of your death
‘ groundless : but when I read your letter, how
‘ was I moved at your relation of what you had
‘ suffered ! How sincerely did I detest Monsieur
‘ De Rhée, and admire you ! The pain I felt
‘ in thinking of your unhappiness, for some time
‘ made me insensible of the high and unequalled
‘ satisfaction I afterwards found, in reflecting
‘ you had escaped it all, and that all you had
‘ gone through served only to exalt your virtue ;
‘ that instead of recollecting it with part of the
‘ pain it gave when it happened, it can only fill
‘ you with the most agreeable reflections, those
‘ that arise from triumphant virtue. It has been
‘ a received maxim, that God gives to no one
‘ more than they can bear : could one have fore-
‘ seen what misfortunes were prepared for you
‘ one might have doubted it ; but the event seems
‘ to justify the maxim. Therefore repine not,
‘ since you have been tried in nothing to which
‘ you were not equal ; but consider that these
‘ sufferings have been necessary to shew, that
‘ as

‘ as much as they exceed what are commonly
‘ undergone, so far you exceed your own
‘ species. As that can scarce appear in a fairer
‘ light, I hope you will no more meet with any
‘ interruptions to the happiness you deserve.
‘ I wish I was with you in the retirement you
‘ describe so truly like one that is disposed by
‘ the state of her mind to delight in every thing.
‘ For my own part, my pleasure and happiness
‘ left me with you. You know how little reason
‘ I had to esteem my grand-children before this
‘ villainous attempt on you ; but I could forgive
‘ them disobedience, though not treachery. I
‘ have never been able to clear them, in my opi-
‘ nion, of having had some hand in what has
‘ befallen you. This has made their sight uneasy
‘ to me, and yet I cannot get courage enough
‘ to undertake the management of my own af-
‘ fairs, and therefore, for my ease in that point,
‘ am forced to endure them in my house. They
‘ have indeed done every thing to make me easy,
‘ but that is not sufficient after having so mate-
‘ rially disturbed my quiet, and broke through
‘ the satisfaction of my life. I would wish you
‘ to come in their place, if you think you
‘ will be secure from fresh attacks. I am so
‘ much afraid of what might happen, that I can-
‘ not desire it. In my opinion, whilst you can
‘ remain where you are without being discovered,
‘ I do not see you can be in a better place. As
‘ soon as you have reason to suspect that the
‘ search will extend there, come to——giving
‘ me notice before, and I will meet you, and
‘ provide a place for your reception. The safest
‘ for you would be to leave the kingdom, and
‘ you shall have such constant remittances as
‘ shall

‘ shall make it perfectly convenient in that respect. If you do not approve that, the best thing you can do surely will be to get into a large family, at a great distance, on the most tolerable conditions; and such a place I believe I could obtain for you. My health is as good as age and grief would let it be; now that it has but one of those to struggle with, I do not doubt but it will improve. I am rejoiced that your constitution has not suffered more, and hope before long I shall have the happiness of seeing you in good health. The annuity you kindly give me an opportunity of bestowing on your attendant, is too small for a man who has in a manner restored you to me. For though you are not with me, yet the satisfaction I feel from the knowledge of your health and safety is; and that is of infinite comfort to me. You must therefore give me leave to double what you mention, and inclosed I send you the bond, which obliges me and my heirs to the regular payment of it. Forgive the trifle I send you by him, it shall be followed with more, to any sum you wish; and I beg you will not controul your inclination in any expence, for money can in no way give me so much pleasure as by contributing, though in the smallest degree, to your satisfaction. Adieu, dearest Cornelia; believe me and all that belongs to me most sincerely yours.’

She accompanied this letter with two hundred Louis-d’ors, and made Moullant a present of twenty. The poor man was transported with the possession of a sum he had never before seen together. It is easy to imagine his

E

dili-

diligence was not slackened by the joy of his mind. He returned so speedily to Cornelia, that notwithstanding the impatience with which she waited for him, yet he arrived before he was expected. The affection Madame Du Maine expressed for her, though it was not a new blessing, gave her fresh pleasure, after having so long been deprived of receiving any tokens of it. What she had done for Moullant gave her true satisfaction, and she would not defer communicating it to him. The poor man fell upon his knees, quite in an extasy, and could not contain himself for some days, but was continually breaking out into exclamations on his own good fortune. She was surprized to see one who had been born and bred in poverty, no better reconciled to it by custom than to dread it so much, as a man must do to feel such exceeding joy at seeing himself delivered from it: she had the curiosity to enquire whether he had suffered more than were the common consequences of poverty. He complained of little, but that he had for some years been hugely fond of a young woman who he was sure would have followed him to any place where he could get a livelihood; for that nothing but the want of that, had prevented them from marrying long ago. She was diverted with the natural way in which he related his love, but was a little afraid lest he should be in too great haste to inform his mistress of his new acquisition, and thereby give room for her being discovered. She entreated him not to write to her till she gave him leave, and promised on that condition she would furnish their house, and stock them with every thing useful. She told him that what he had done for her would
cease

cease to be a benefit if it was known. His gratitude so far got the better of his love, that he promised to forbear all correspondence with his mistress as long as Cornelia could command.

At some of the inns at which he stopped in his journey, he heard that men were out in search of a young lady: by circumstances he could not doubt she was the person sought for. He told her of it, and likewise an oath he was told one of the parties had made, to leave no place in the kingdom unsearched. The pursuit had been chiefly on the road between the Chasteau de Rhée and Madame du Maine's. These accounts gave some fear to Cornelia, though she thought her retreat as little likely to be discovered as possible. However, she sent him once more to Madame Du Maine, ordering him to travel only by night, for fear of being known by any of the parties he spoke of. She wrote Madame Du Maine word what she had heard, which made her wish she could find her a place in such a family as she mentioned, (in case she should be obliged to leave her present habitation) where the number would make her safe from insults, and secure from being seized: for that she could not think of going into another kingdom, she was too young and too inexperienced to be able to conduct herself properly in so difficult an affair. Besides, that she had hitherto been exposed to so many misfortunes, that she could not help dreading the future, or suspecting herself of some fault that had brought them upon her so thick, since the little time she had been under her own direction: that with this notion she could not venture herself out of the kingdom, inhabited by her only friend, and where she

might be observed: for probably she should be near to the place where that friend was, and in her meet with a kind and affectionate support and protectress.

Madame Du Maine sent her an answer, the best calculated to raise her spirits and quiet her mind. She desired her not to reproach herself; for her behaviour was in every particular a worthy pattern for that of every other woman; and if the decrees of providence had not been unalterable, must have secured her from the misfortunes that have befallen her. She promised to do every thing she desired, and advised her to follow the plan she had given her in her first letter, in case she should be molested in her little asylum. Cornelia having thus settled the best scheme she could, tried to let her cautions be mixed with as little fear as possible, that her peace of mind might be as little interrupted as the nature of the case would admit. She amused herself with observing the customs of her neighbours. The contented way of life they led pleased her much. The luxury of the nation had never spread itself to that little village. The land for some miles round them was barren and rocky, and the roads extremely bad, which prevented their having much communication with any people beyond the village. Every family had a few acres of ground for the whole of their possessions. This produced them such a quantity of herbs as served for their support. There was seldom any meat eat amongst them; none of them having land enough to keep any number of cattle. Part of it was sowed with hemp, which they spun for their cloaths; the only sort they had. Every thing they wore they contrived to make among themselves, and the only

only way of payment was out of the produce of their land; each contributed their superfluity to their neighbours assistance, which kept up a friendly intercourse and good fellowship amongst them. By inter-marriages they were almost all related, and lived so amicably that it appeared a large family, rather than a village composed of separate tenements. The men took care of the cultivation of their small portion of land; the women's province was, to tend their children, knit, spin, and do all the household business: all which things the men assisted in, when not employed in tillage. The husbands partook of their wives work, the young men of their mistresses's.

A man would never have gained a smile from one of those young maidens, who had thought the best way to shew his love was by whispering tender things in her ear, and languishing and sighing by her side; his love would have been judged less than his laziness. He who knit or spun most, or otherwise shewed his industry in the most effectual manner, was looked on as the truest lover. In fine weather they generally left their houses, and sat on roots of trees in the wood, all making a joyful society. The vanity of the young women consisted in the assistance they had received from their lovers. In this they used to vie with one another; but sometimes one remarkably pretty would have two or three swains at a time, all contending for the prize by their industry. Boys and girls, indifferently, were bred up to business from three years old. The inhabitants of this place appeared a nation by themselves. Cornelia would sometimes sit amongst them with great pleasure in the wood, to see their happiness,

hear their natural untaught reflections, and observe the general amity. The tenderness of the particular ties was excessively agreeable to her. She used to ask questions about most of the young people, who sat in couples; and found that the loves of many had subsisted from their birth. The women declared their sentiments as freely as the men; their reserve gave no pain to the men, whose innocence and purity were so equal that they never were so presuming as to give fears to the women. They all appeared like our first parents before the fall; their innocence as unblemished; their happiness as uninterrupted; and their tenderness as delicate.

To behave with good nature and affection to those they were united to, was looked on as so necessary a point, that if any offended against it, they were immediately excluded from their society: no one would speak or shew the least signs of acquaintance with any such. The reason they gave for this severity, was, that whoever could not behave well to a person whom they had preferred to all others, one whose disposition they had good opportunities to know, to whose happiness they had undertaken to contribute, as far as in them lay, could never make a fit member for any society. It is to be observed, that as there was no inequality of fortunes, here marriages were made only through a natural liking: they had nothing to tempt one another to sell themselves for the gratification of their vanity; and as parents could not be biassed by covetousness, where every one was equally poor, they never thwarted their children's inclinations. They said that they could not expect them to perform the fatigues of a family with the care and chearfulness they

they ought, unless love was their support under it; and therefore their children's tastes, and not theirs, were to be gratified. By these means, to behave well to their partner in wedlock, was so generally the inclination of most, and the interest of all, that an unhappy marriage was not to be found among them once in a century.

Cornelia could gladly have spent her life in this place: but she had not been in it above seven weeks, when Moullant came one day in a great hurry, and told her, that as he was walking to a little village within about five miles, he met a man who informed him, by way of news, that about half a dozen of men were searching every house in it for a young woman, knowing that, armed as they were, none of the inhabitants would dare to resist them. I suppose, continued the man, you will have a visit from them to-morrow, for they intend to go all about the country, by what I can learn. However, they do no harm; but they frightened us at first, as we did not know but they might design to carry off some of our young lasses. Moullant having heard this, turned back instead of pursuing his way. It was then late in the evening, but Cornelia saw she had no time to lose. She ordered her horses, rewarded her landlady liberally, and set out directly towards the place Madame Du Maine had mentioned to her. She travelled hard all night; but next day considering the danger of meeting her pursuers, she determined to disguise herself, and to continue her journey on horse-back no longer. She pitched upon the dress of a student of one of the universities, as it preserved the de-

ency of her own habit. She sent Moullant before her to the first great town to buy her one, she waited for his return, and just before she went into the town put it on. Thus disguised, she ventured to travel in a post-chaise; and making her guide put a patch on one eye to prevent his being known, she travelled on with more ease both of mind and body, till she got to her journey's end.

She then dispatched him to give notice to Madame Du Maine, who came to her as soon as she heard where she was. The meeting was very joyful on both sides, but was much troubled by considering that a separation was so soon to follow it. Madame Du Maine endeavoured to prevail on Cornelia to come to her house; which, if Madame and Monsieur De Limon were removed to any other habitation, she thought might be safe, and in the mean time Cornelia might be concealed. She absolutely refused to comply, and prevailed on her friend to think no more of it. Madame Du Maine then sent to a lady that lived in the next province, tho' at a great many leagues distance, to let her know that she could send her the person she had mentioned to her, as one she might possibly get to educate her daughter; and that she could assure her she should send her a very great treasure. The lady, whom we shall call Madame De La Roche, wrote back, after many thanks for the service Madame Du Maine had done her, that she should be glad of her as soon as she pleased. As soon as Cornelia was equipped with every thing necessary, she was to set out.

The danger of being discovered by Octavio, being, by the long time that had intervened,

vened, muchabated, Cornelia, before she parted from Madame Du Maine, informed her of her birth, and gave her a minute account of all that had happened to her before she was acquainted with her. Madame Du Maine made her a present of bonds, amounting to the value of five thousand pounds, offering to receive the interest and remit it to her. She told her she gave her this, not as all she was welcome to, but that she might be at liberty to leave the place she was going to, as soon as she thought herself safe from violence. It is so difficult and so unnecessary to describe what is felt by a grateful heart at receiving any great benefit, that I shall not attempt to say what Cornelia's sense of this goodness was : those who have gratitude can better feel it than words can express it ; and those who have it not, cannot understand the description. It is sufficient to say, it made the impression it ought ; and that her acknowledgments were so sincere and affectionate, that they gave Madame Du Maine more pleasure, than the occasion of them had given Cornelia. Many tears were shed by both at their taking leave of each other, and with many good wishes on each side they parted. It was agreed that Cornelia should wear her disguise till she came near Madame De La Roche's house ; and that Moullant might be ignorant of the place she was going to, she dismissed him with a gratuity of thirty pounds to furnish his house, before she set out on this new journey ; not that she was apprehensive of his betraying her, but she feared that in conversation with his mistress, or with others, he might inadvertently let fall some expressions, from

whence the place of her abode might be easily gathered.

The second day of her journey, about noon, her chaise overtook some men on horseback, amongst whom, to her inexpressible terror, she saw the servant that waited on Monsieur De Rhée when she was with him. The fear that her disguise would not conceal her from his knowledge, almost deprived her of sense; but the necessity of doing nothing to excite his observation or suspicion, gave her resolution to overcome the sudden shock, and to hide her aching heart under a chearful easy countenance. Great power over herself was requisite to enable her to do this, for they travelled together above two leagues, she not daring to speak to her postillion to alter his pace. One of them thinking her what her dress implied she was, began to talk to her. It is easy to imagine her answers were not very lively, tho' she was attacked with mirth. In being obliged to speak, she was every moment in danger of being discovered, when she was unexpectedly relieved at the meeting of two roads, by their taking the contrary one from that which she pursued. Tho' the rest of her journey passed unattended with any accident, yet she had not recovered this shocking alarm when she got to Madame De La Roche's house, where she was received in the most obliging manner by that lady, her son and two daughters. Her person filled them all with surprize. They had never seen a woman of so much beauty and dignity; for a faultless form is seldom met with, the charms of one part of the person being generally qualified by the blemishes of the other. Tho' she raised their admiration, she did not dispose all
of

of them in her favour. Henrietta, the eldest daughter, was too much inclined to envy, not to feel some the first moment of her appearance; but the footing Madame Du Maine had introduced her upon was such, that she was not subjected to suffer many bad effects from it. She was to be with them as a companion, to have no wages; and her only business was to take care of the education of Lucinda, the youngest daughter. The appearance of this young lady immediately prejudiced Cornelia in her favour; and she afterwards found, with the utmost satisfaction, that this favourable opinion fell short of what was Lucinda's due.

It may be proper here to let the reader into the characters of this family. Madame De La Roche was near fifty years old. In her youth she had been handsome, tho' the regularity of her features had been a good deal disgraced by a countenance that was but a small recommendation of her temper, and which did not belie it; for she was haughty, passionate, and self-interested, inclined naturally to covetousness, but had been kept within tolerable bounds by vanity. Her manner was polite, and her understanding agreeable, whenever she chose it should be so. It had been capable of improvement, but had never been cultivated to much advantage. It was specious, and had enough of that sort of reading which serves to ornament conversation, and give a woman a little more the air of learned than one of that sex should wish to have. She had been twice married. By her first husband, who lived a very short time, she had one daughter, Henrietta, whom I have mentioned; and by the second, a son and daughter. He had been once mar-

ried also, and had two sons when they were first united, but one of them died soon after. By hypocrisy and cunning, she made her husbands fond of her ; and by the violence of her temper, inspired, at least, an equal portion of fear. From these motives they had provided so greatly for her at their deaths, that she was the richest widow in France.

Her eldest daughter Henrietta had no beauty to boast of ; but had the misfortune to be as desirous of admiration, and to think she as well deserved it, as if she had been a model of all charms. The opinions of others differed so much from hers, that she lived in a constant course of disappointments, which made her very envious of those who were more caressed. Her understanding was tolerable, till it was perverted by a little reading and a great deal of vanity ; for by those she became a mere pedant. Her faults all sprung from that source. She was naturally compassionate and good natured, and had some good principles ; but vanity got the better of them all. She would do unjust, nay cruel things, if that suggested any thing to her, that made it necessary to use such means to attain it. Her envy had no other foundation. Her resentments were owing to the same cause, it confounded all sense of right and wrong, and was equally the cause of both. In short, if she did a good action it was from the desire of praise. She read, worked, dressed, and indeed did every thing from the same motive. She had no inclination to do any bad thing, if it was not such as her vanity, or envy, the branch springing from that stock, prompted her to. She was about five and twenty ; which superiority in age, and the unequal share she had of her mother's affection, gave her a power

power of tyrannizing over her sister; who excited too much envy in her, to be well used by any one so entirely governed by it.

Lucinda was scarce fifteen. She was very little, but very elegantly formed, and extremely pretty. Her countenance was the most pleasing that could be, lively and sensible, with the greatest sweetness and tenderness that could be mixed together; and her mind was of as pleasing a composition as her face. She had great vivacity, the most amiable temper, and was genteel and affectionate. She was tractable, modest, and humble; desirous of improvement, and industrious in attaining it; and grieved only that her mother had given her so few opportunities. It was by her entreaties, that an uncle, who was fond of her, had prevailed on Madame De La Roche to enquire after some one capable of instructing her. The behaviour of her mother and sister made her life but uneasy, being continually exposed to the ill temper of the one, and the envy of the other. She was never happy but when alone, tho' her natural temper and her age disposed her to company, and to take pleasure in the little addresses she was sure to meet with. She had just vanity enough to see, and be diverted by them; but not enough to think the better of herself for them. They appeared to her extremely trifling; and she could with difficulty think any one could be uneasy for want of them, or dislike another woman for meeting with a greater share. The fourth I mentioned on Cornelia's reception, was a brother of Lucinda's, of eighteen years of age, a good-natured, well disposed youth, designed to be bred up to the church.

It is now time to return to the company I have been so minutely describing. Madame De La Roche was much pleased with Cornelia's behaviour. Lucinda was delighted: and indeed she had been at first rejoiced to hear she was young enough to be her companion and friend, and at the same time as capable of instructing her as if she had been older; but there was something so taking and strikingly agreeable in Cornelia's person, that it would have been strange if she had not been better pleased now she saw her, than she could have been in imagination. Monsieur Du Pré, Lucinda's brother, liked her at least as well as his Greek and Hebrew; and could have given up one of his future benefices for her. He found home dull while he found none but sisters there. This addition to the society made him relish it much more; and he with pleasure thought of laying aside the dry study of divinity for her company, a matter much more pleasing to him than the tedious controversies between contentious cavilling churchmen.

Henrietta was the only one discontented, especially after having attempted to make a parade of her learning, and finding herself, by a few words that dropt from Cornelia, so far behind her. At night they retired, and shewed Cornelia her apartment, which was next to Lucinda's chamber, and then left them. Lucinda had been impatient to tell her how fortunate she thought herself in being under her direction, and assured her of the most implicit obedience. Cornelia expressed an equal satisfaction, in finding one who had reconciled her attendance as much to her inclination, as it was her duty. They agreed that the next day should begin their several offices, the one of an instructor, and the other of a pupil.

Lucinda's

Lucinda's impatience being satisfied by this promise, she left Cornelia to recover by rest the fatigues of her journey; which indeed was necessary to her, more from the agitation her spirits had been in, than from the length of the journey. Quiet was never so comfortable to her; she hoped she was now settled in safety, and should be no longer the sport of fortune. With this pleasing notion she went to rest, and having slept more than her usual time waked well refreshed. As soon as she had unpacked and put her things in order, she went into Lucinda's room, whom she found up; though her mother and sister, who always kept late hours, were still in bed. They sat together till the general call to breakfast obliged them to go down stairs.

When breakfast was over, Madame De La Roche declared, that from that moment she put Lucinda under her care and direction; and charged her under pain of her displeasure to pay her all possible obedience, which she with great readiness promised.

They soon retired together to walk over the gardens and woods, Lucinda being desirous to shew them to Cornelia; who was much pleased with their beauty, and agreed with her little pupil to spend a great deal of their time in that part of them which was least frequented by the rest of the family. Cornelia found her scholar very docile, and was pleased to see the delight she took in reading. They spent almost all their time together; and though most of it was employed in study, yet they found a good deal for conversation. Cornelia excused herself from going into company, and Lucinda was not permitted to be
in

in any. She had never been allowed more liberty than to visit in the neighbouring village, and this liberty extended only to one lady.

Lucinda prevailed on Cornelia to accompany her to this lady's house, whose name was Julia. She was born of a noble family, was handsome, had a fine person, a heart that did honour to her birth, and an excellent understanding. Her father had been dead many years. He had left her fortune in the hands of a brother, whose estate was equal to his quality, tho' not to his expences. These reduced him so low, that poor Julia seldom got any part of the interest of her fortune, and the principal he could not possibly restore to her. She had lived some years in the world, exposed to the utmost difficulties for want of money. At length, despairing of her brother's ever becoming more just to her, as every year farther impaired his fortune, she determined to relinquish a way of life she could no longer support, and took a resolution of retiring into the country to live as cheap as possible. This village was the place she fixed upon, as one where she was not known, and where she might live at a very small expence. She took a house, which, except in cleanness, was little better than a cottage. She kept but one servant, and lived in the most sparing manner she could.

Julia had been settled in this place about eighteen months, and had here enjoyed a tranquillity and happiness beyond what she had ever before experienced, while she lived among the great. She passed that part of her time, which was not taken up by necessary work, in reading. Madame De La Roche's house was so near, that a visit from her was unavoidable. The acquaintance

rance with that family continued, though not intimately with any, except Lucinda; and she was not very often permitted to visit Julia. Cornelia approved of their friendship so much that she often went with Lucinda, and helped to enliven Julia's solitude; who was so charmed with Cornelia's conversation, that in a little time it was difficult to judge whether Julia or Lucinda were fondest of her. Both of them had a thorough confidence in her, and found that they never communicated their uneasinesses to her without having them relieved by her advice.

Lucinda's greatest concern was the disagreeable temper of her mother and sister, and the absence of a brother, Mr. De La Roche's son by his first wife. She continually regretted the want of his company, who had been her first and best friend, and had done all he had time for towards her improvement and diversion, having always been extremely fond of her, and trusted her with his most intimate thoughts almost from her childhood. She used to tell Cornelia that she hoped she would captivate her brother, at least, enough to cure him of a violent passion, with which he was already possessed. "And if it should turn out so," added Lucinda, "I advise you to bid adieu to your heart, for it can never resist him; and yet if it should surrender, who knows what dangers may ensue! My poor sister has languished and pined to no purpose so long, that if she has not more patience than I can suspect her of, her rage must soon exceed that of any neglected fair one in romance. I would pity her, if the persecutions of her love and of my mother's desire to gratify it, did not torment him so much that they have almost banished him from
this

this place. Despair must have cured her by this time, if her insufferable vanity did not preserve her from it, in direct opposition to all reason; for surely no one had ever less encouragement to hope. A match had been intended by my father and mother before his death, between these two children of former marriages, as soon as they should be of a proper age. I must do my brother the justice to say, he never shewed the least disposition to like Henrietta; but her heart was so fertile a soil, that love grew in it to a great height, though the poor plant was never nourished by the least sun-shine of favour."

Lucinda's fancy that her brother must in time grow enamoured of Cornelia, was often a subject for their mirth. One day Lucinda came to her with great joy, telling her, her new lover would be with them before the end of the day. "You mean," says Cornelia, "your brother; being your brother and my lover are very distinct things. Poor Du Pré who appeared so well disposed, had ventured no farther than to hint a few douceurs, which nothing less ingenious than female vanity could make me know to be meant for myself. My dear Lucinda, I have nothing to do with lovers, I have no room for any new person in my heart. Your sister may let her envy and jealousy sleep, for I shall not give her occasion to exercise them, not willingly I am sure; and altho' I might expect a declaration in my favour, if the poor man were reduced to choose either me or Henrietta; yet without that dreadful alternative, his heart would be pretty safe."

Just as she had said this, the door was opened, and Lucinda, who, by being over-against it, saw her long wished for brother before he entered,

ran

ran to embrace him, and met him just as he had got into the room. But what was her surprize upon finding him faint away in her arms. She called Cornelia to her assistance, and looking round, saw her almost in the same helpless condition, dumb and motionless. But Cornelia recovering sooner than he did, ran with the utmost concern to his assistance: for this brother of Lucinda's proved to be Bernardo. From an alteration that had been made in his name since Cornelia saw him, she had never flattered herself with the hopes of meeting him so soon. Happy it was that Bernardo had come alone to enquire after his beloved sister, before he had paid his compliments to Madame De La Roche and Henrietta, who were walked out. When he came to himself, he uttered nothing but unconnected raptures at his good fortune, in so unexpectedly finding her whom he had so long sought for in vain. There was nothing tender which the joy of that present moment did not make them say to each other; till Lucinda, after congratulating them on their happiness, desired them to consider that prudence and a very exact government could only preserve it: for that if they did not lay such a restraint on themselves as not even to be suspected of any former acquaintance, they must lose each other's company; and she herself, Cornelia's conversation and instruction. They promised to act with all possible caution; and hoped, that the constraint would be rewarded by the frequent opportunities they would have of conversing together without any other witness than Lucinda. It was agreed, that to make this the more easy, and avoid giving envy or jealousy, Cornelia should be less with Madame De La Roche

Roche and Henrietta than ever, and frequently retire, as from her own choice, before Lucinda left the company.

Bernardo then begged to know how he came to be so happy as to find his Cornelia there. Just as she was going to answer his question, they heard that Madame De La Roche and Henrietta were coming to them; and Cornelia had but just time to get into her own room, and Bernardo to receive his mother at the door. Cornelia had leisure to compose her fluttered spirits before dinner. His were not so easily contained, and Henrietta thought herself obliged to him for the joy he was in, and looked upon it as the most favourable presage she had for a long time been flattered with.

As soon as dinner was over, Cornelia left them. In the pleasing train her thoughts were in, she was not to be pitied; although he could not shake off his company to enjoy a moment's conversation with her, till after they were gone to bed. He then came into Lucinda's room, where Cornelia met him. The two lovers were now at liberty to rejoice in their good fortune, and to assure each other that their hearts were not changed. But though these assurances were so pleasing that they could never be too often repeated; yet Bernardo's curiosity, at length, made him renew the question which Cornelia had been prevented from answering in the morning. She then related all that had happened to her from the time she left Bernardo. Her account raised all the various passions of his mind. He trembled at the recital of the dangers she had been in. Indignation and fury at the author of her calamities succeeded. This gave place to joy for
her

her escape; and his admiration of her virtue, spirit and resolution, convinced him more than ever how much she deserved his fondest love. Happy in her constancy, and in finding her fixed with his beloved sister, he passed great part of the night in expressions of the delightful situation of his mind. Lucinda was, at last, forced to put an end to this interview. Bernardo retired to his apartment; but his spirits were too much elevated to allow him any sleep. Under the same roof with his Cornelia, after so long and so dangerous an absence, she constant, kind, improved in beauty, and every other charm; what lover could have slept!

The two lovers by conversing together, with an air of ease and indifference before Madame De La Roche and Henrietta, escaped suspicion; and found means to pass great part of every day with Lucinda. She and Cornelia never being in bed after five in the morning, and the other two ladies never forsaking theirs till ten, many hours might be appropriated to love. As Du Pré was frequently with them, it was adviseable for their own ease to make a confidant of him, that they might be under no greater restraint than was absolutely necessary; and they were the less unwilling to do this, as Bernardo thought he had reason to depend on his truth and secrecy, tho' he was young. They used often to get Julia to make one of their little morning parties. They amused her, and her company was perfectly agreeable to them all. Cornelia had a particular desire to cultivate her friendship, in hopes of being able to prevail upon her to accept privately of a part of that income; which in the station she appeared in, she could not spend, nor durst give

give away, since more than small charities would have made too great an eclat. She did some under the name of Lucinda, and of her two brothers; but nothing that could bear much proportion to the interest of 5000*l*. nor durst they, for fear of offending their mother, and having their incomes lessened, lend their names often on such occasions. Madame De La Roche allowed them handsomely; but would not have done it if she had not intended they should spend it in a manner to make it appear that she did so. Vanity made her give, but at the same time it took from the pleasure of those that received, by obliging them to a certain manner of expence; with which even Bernardo, who seemed least in her power, was obliged to comply.

The time of the lovers and their friends passed away in great felicity. Lucinda improved daily to such a degree that it surprized all her relations, and delighted her uncle who had been the occasion of her having so excellent an instructor. She read a great many hours every day, and with such care as made every hour bring its improvement; but she received most from conversations with Cornelia, so much above what she had ever before been used to. Henrietta was happy in seeing Bernardo stay with more pleasure, and appear more gay than she had ever remembered him. She hoped her merit was at last known to him, and expected the sense of it would every day ripen into love. Thus they all enjoyed either real or imaginary happiness. Perhaps there was not in the kingdom, a family wherein an equal number of persons were so happy. The two that were most so, had little more to desire. Bernardo would indeed have wished

wished to secure and increase his felicity by being united to Cornelia for ever. But yet he complied with her determination, which was absolute against a private marriage.

Whilst they were thus living in a constant series of joy, one they dearly loved was in a very different state of mind; but her good nature would not allow her to trouble so much satisfaction by the communication of her uneasiness: what could only give pain she never imparted without necessity. However, one day brought on that necessity; the rest of the family being engaged in company, Cornelia walked out by herself to visit Julia; whom, by a constant course of rain, she had been prevented from seeing for near a week. When she entered her room she found her in a flood of tears. The sight shocked her extremely; but hoping the cause was such as she might remove, she most earnestly intreated her to trust her with it. Julia could no longer refuse to comply with so sincere and tender a friend as she had found Cornelia on all occasions. She began thus,

“ Would it not appear like distrust, or an unfriendly obstinacy, I would refuse, my dear Cornelia, to comply with your request; since my distress will touch your generous and tender heart. But as I believe it would not be less hurt by a silence, which you might interpret into a want of a due sense of your friendship, I must obey you. You see the poverty which every thing belonging to me declares. You know how much in justice I should be raised above it, if possession always followed right; and that I retired from all my friends and acquaintance in hopes to live upon the little I received, which
was

was never above the tenth part of what was due to me. I could never bear to use people in trade as my brother did me : running in debt without a prospect of payment, always appeared to me very criminal. This principle made me acquiesce in the way of life I have got into, and by degrees I became as happy as I could be under the sense I had of my brother's unkindness. Persuaded my expences could not exceed my income, I was free from the worst of uneasinesses, the fear of being in debt. But yet the pain of being ill treated by one I loved so tenderly, who had always professed the strongest affection for me, and till my father died had shewn it in every thing, remained. My income is so trifling when compared with his, that he could scarce feel the just payment of it. He has known the difficulties it has reduced me to, and yet will not give up the smallest of his pleasures to procure me the ease that in justice I ought to have. I should be much less uneasy if I could feel as little affection for him as he shews for me ; but I look on this usage to be the effects of a disposition that leads him head-long into expence, and hurrying him away in pursuit of ambitious or vain views, prevents his thinking long enough on the sufferings he brings on others to redress them. His bad actions proceed from failings, not vices. This belief nourishes my love for him, at the time that I grieve for being so little in his thoughts, and suffer from the train of consequences that follow it. However, your friendship and that of our dear Lucinda, have made me bear it of late much better than I ever had done ; and could I live on here, I should in my little cottage be very happy ; but I find he will not enable me
to

to live any where. He had promised to pay me part of the interest that was due to me above a month ago : as for the arrear, I did not ask it. I have written to him often since the time elapsed ; and to day have received a letter from his steward, wherein he tells me, that his lord has not any money, nor can have any these four months. As little as I spend, I have not enough by me to supply me with a week's maintenance. Having received nothing from him for near four years, to enable me to live here, I was obliged to sell almost every thing that belonged to me, even to my very clothes and laces ; which tho' they sold for no great sum, being all pretty old, yet the little they brought in was necessary for my support. On this I have subsisted since I came ; but now I have not any thing left me that can serve for a supply. Living with any of my relations would be more expensive to me than my present way of life ; not to mention the misery of dependence. Teach me, my dear Cornelia, how to provide for my support : nature has given you such a superiority of understanding, and painful experience has so greatly improved it, that the old must beg counsel of you ; the difference of age cannot make them your equals. This gives you a right to direct me, though I am several years older than yourself. Find out any means for me, and whatever you advise I will follow ; but let the last choice be an application to my friends. They were acquainted with my circumstances, and I would not beg for an assistance they would not give me unasked. I had rather live by my own labour, than on what people I thought my friends, and to whom I

F

always

always was a sincere one, might give out of shame and not out of love."

Cornelia rejoiced to find her grief had no other source; told her, she could with ease inform her of a means of being relieved from all the difficulties she laboured under. "If," says she, "any pleasure could arise to me out of your pain, I should feel much from your present circumstances, since they put it in my power to make money yield me some satisfaction. I have an income much beyond what I dare spend. If you, my dear Julia, do not despise me too much to receive any thing at my hands, you shall be freed from the difficulties you at present are under, and I from the secret pain of having unemployed money by me. I own I am exacting the greatest favour of you that you can bestow on me. To give, does not shew so great a part of love, as to accept: this is the greatest sign of a tender and perfect affection in such a heart as yours. Therefore, my dear friend, make me happy by shewing you have this degree of affection for me; shew me that you look on me as another self, and upon every thing I have as yours. By the generosity of Madame Du Maine, I have a considerable income, tho' I have hitherto had but little use for it. Forgive me if I insist on your sharing it with me, which were you to refuse, I must be convinced you have no friendship for me. I love you well enough to share your possessions, if you were the person favoured by fortune. Consider these sentiments give me a title to success, and wound me not by letting me perceive you have not the same degree of confidence in me."

Julia

Julia was filled with astonishment at this offer. The behaviour of those who had called themselves her friends, could not but make her think it strange to find one so very different. Tho' the love she had for Cornelia removed great part of the uneasiness persons are apt to feel, who after a long independency are obliged to accept of favours ; yet she could not immediately get over all scruples. But the manner Cornelia insisted on it, in a little time bent Julia's resolutions, and she complied, tho' she could never be brought to receive more than a small part of what her friend offered ; and she absolutely refused to take more than what would maintain her in the way of life she was settled in.

As they were alike generous, this made a great struggle between them, and Cornelia was at last obliged to yield a seeming obedience, but resolved that Julia should receive the assistance she was determined to give her in another way. Cornelia, from time to time, made her presents of all the things she thought might be useful in her house or for her person. Julia endeavoured to moderate Cornelia's generosity ; till convinced by frequent trials of the impossibility of succeeding, she was forced to give it up, and acquiesce in accepting of a much better income than she had enjoyed for many years past. This put her much at her ease, and having at length found so true a friend, she enjoyed a satisfaction of mind she had never before known. She acknowledged she had never lived so happily, and that dependence, which she had so carefully avoided, was become a pleasure by the delicacy of Cornelia's manner.

Julia having thus recovered her spirits again, became a very agreeable companion ; and they

all enjoyed their happiness some time longer, till it began to be troubled by the same power that had hitherto been the author of their felicity, love, but in a different object. Henrietta's passion was strengthened by the long enjoyment she had now had of Bernardo's conversation; and Madame De La Roche was continually soliciting him to reward that constant affection, and representing to him the great advantages he would find by adding so large a fortune to his own. But all she could say had little effect on a heart so well defended. She applied to Cornelia, and desired her to try whether her arguments could not prevail on him, having a great opinion of her understanding, and of her eloquence, which would enable her to see and set forth all advantages in the fairest and strongest light. Love had so much power over Henrietta, as to make her humbly beg Cornelia's assistance, to engage Lucinda to use her influence on Bernardo, in Henrietta's behalf.

Cornelia could not have undergone a more disagreeable scene. The sincerity of her temper made it very painful to her to conceal a truth, and suffer them to go on in deceiving themselves, and putting their confidence in her who was the chief cause of their disappointment. She pitied Henrietta, whose passion was very violent, and feared the consequence of her resentment, when she found how unavailing all endeavours in her favour would prove.

Henrietta's love was not of the soft sort that bears scorn without complaint: she was more likely to revenge even the least neglect. The mind wherein love and vanity are joined is in a very turbulent state, and makes a woman more
fit

fit to inspire terror than affection. After so open an explanation on her side, the very sight of her became a torment to Bernardo. Every look either intreated a return of kindness, or reproached him for his indifference. He was incessantly beset by Madame De La Roche, who was always repeating her unsuccessful arguments and solicitations. He told her frankly, that he did not love Henrietta, that he esteemed her, and had great gratitude for the honour she did him, but that they had been bred up so much in the manner of brother and sister, that he could never look upon her in any other light. He begged that he might always live with her in the same way, and that she would pity his misfortune, in being by such a prejudice prevented from enjoying the happiness that would have attended an union with her, if her charms had made the same impression on him that they must make on any other man. He added, that he hoped he deserved her compassion the more for having with candour owned the truth, without suffering any mercenary views to prevail on him to do her the injury of depriving her of some other, who would do more justice to her charms than his unfortunate disposition would suffer him to do, and not letting her be united to one who so ill deserved her.

These answers were not sufficient to deliver him from Madame De La Roche's importunities. She assured him, the prejudice he mentioned would soon be removed after marriage; and that his love would then be the greater on account of his former insensibility. But finding that intreaties prevailed little, she tried whether threats might not be more powerful. She frequently hinted to him, that she was not obliged to supply

him with money any longer than his obedience deserved it.

He often consulted his four companions about the means of putting an end to this torment. After all other means had proved in vain, they were reduced to advise him to try whether absence would not a little cool Henrietta's passion. He could not resolve to comply immediately with this proposal. To leave his Cornelia, with whom he now enjoyed so many happy hours, was no easy matter. Their love had increased with their acquaintance. To see her hourly was become necessary to him; and after having enjoyed so much of her conversation, he could scarce believe he could live without it. How would he be able to bear the morning hours, which now passed so happily in her company, when he should have nothing to fill them but recollection, and the regret that attends it, when it brings to our mind past pleasures, without any certainty of their return! It was not without frequent struggles with himself, that he could be brought to resolve on leaving her for a moment. But at length the necessity of his departure became so urgent, that he could no longer resist. He wrote to his uncle, to beg he would insist on his coming to him, and in the mean time consulted with his friends about the means of returning from time to time amongst them. The manner in which a constant correspondence of letters between him and Cornelia might be carried on, was also settled. Their remaining time passed in vows of constancy, and assurances of the most tender affection. They continually lamented the cruel necessity that separated them, and could not enjoy perfectly the few remaining

hours.

hours without their being interrupted by thinking how soon they must be over.

When his uncle's letter came, he shewed it to Madame De La Roche, and prepared to obey the summons. She could not help suspecting this had been brought by his desire, but he had too good a plea for his departure for her to contradict it. She smothered her anger; but Henrietta was not so much mistress of her resentment. It appeared in so insolent a manner, as might have cured love, if there had been any towards her in Bernardo's heart. The night before he left the place he spent in Lucinda's room, where Cornelia and he appeared in as much grief as if they had been parting for ever; nor could they be made easy by the assurances that Julia had given him, of receiving him at her house in women's cloaths, which the fairness of his complexion, his youth, and the delicacy of his features, made a very convenient disguise. None of them preferred sleep to each other's company, nor did they part till they were informed that Henrietta was coming to them. Julia and Cornelia then left the brother and sister together. Henrietta came in with great concern in her countenance: the nearness of Bernardo's departure had driven away her resentment; and she now felt nothing but the pain of losing the sight of him. She enquired when she might hope for his return, but received no comfortable answer to her question. The expressions of her concern for his leaving them gave him so little pleasure, and put him under such difficulties to make proper answers, that he took his leave as soon as he had made his compliments to Madame De La Roche. It had been agreed between them, that Cornelia should not be present,

sent, lest their grief putting them off their guard, might give room for suspicion. Fortunately for her, Henrietta, who apprehended that he went away rather to avoid her than to see his uncle, was so much afflicted that she was taken ill, and Madame De La Roche never left her room for two days. By this accident Cornelia had time to recover the languor which grief had spread over her countenance, before she was exposed to their observation.

Bernardo's absence was but too sensibly felt by Cornelia; and the kind endeavours of her remaining friends did but ill succeed. They soon found that even their conversation was slighted, and solitude preferred to it. But in about a fortnight a letter came that did what they could not do: she had been extremely uneasy at not having heard from Bernardo. This letter, filled with the tenderest assurances of his love, the kindest care for her, and the strongest professions of fidelity, revived her. He informed her, that after having left her with the utmost regret, and travelled on without reflecting where he was to go, insensible to every thing around him, his thoughts were not drawn off from her till he found himself benighted in a forest. His servant, being unacquainted with the country, was of no use to him as a guide: that they wandered for some time, till at last they perceived a house not far from them. A storm to which they had been exposed about half an hour, and which threatened a much longer continuance, obliged them to beg for shelter: that he was received by the lady of the house, her sister and daughter, with all imaginable civility, and provided with all things that could contribute to his refreshment. But that he was soon
taken

taken extremely ill, fell into a fever, and continued delirious for several days. He assured Cornelia that nothing else should have prevented his writing to her : that his love was too powerful to have submitted to bodily disorders, and that the only thing that could abate its appearances for the shortest time, was the loss of all sense, which whilst he possessed must be always filled with her image. He told her, he was so well recovered that he did not doubt being able to set out for his uncle's house in a very few days, as he should be supported in his journey by the joyful hopes of finding a letter from her, the only comfort absence would allow him in exchange for those many hours of perfect happiness he had enjoyed, before this cruel separation was made necessary. He concluded, by desiring her to direct her answer to his uncle's house, and begged she would prevail upon Julia to let him come to her in the manner they had projected, they day after he should get to his uncle's ; as he should then have paid his respects to him, and might for a little time suspend the painful absence, to which they had decreed him. Many more passionate assurances of this kind forced themselves from his pen, before he could prevail on himself to bid her adieu.

The shock Cornelia at first received upon hearing he had been so ill, soon gave place to the joy she felt in the hopes of seeing him in so short a time. She immediately obtained Julia's consent to receive him in his female habit, as a relation of her own. She then answered his letter with the same truth and sincerity with which she had returned his love. If her expressions were less strong than his, they were not less tender. They were such as must make absence pleasant at the

first moment of their being received, by a heart truly sensible of the worth of the affection they expressed. A tenderness, that in a great measure would have been suppressed in the presence of the person beloved, shone forth without reserve in her letter. She let him know Julia's readiness to receive him, but begged he would not undertake a journey beyond his strength; and that in the certainty of his love, she would patiently wait for the happiness of seeing him, till he was perfectly recovered.

Cornelia now began again to enjoy her usual spirits, relish all the pleasures of her situation, and the more pleasing expectation of seeing Bernardo. Not hearing again from him, made her hope that every day would bring this wished-for visitor: but frequent disappointments soon gave her more pain than expectation did pleasure. He neither came nor wrote. To what could she attribute this? Was it sickness or indifference that occasioned it? Every supposition brought misery along with it. Sometimes she feared some misfortune had happened to him; and sometimes that the greatest had befallen her: in other words, that he was become inconstant. But this fear came but seldom, and never lasted long. The confidence she had in him, built on the long trial thro' which his love had passed unhurt, preserved her from giving way to jealousy. Yet she was almost reduced to wish it, believing that nothing but the most violent distemper, or worse accident, could make him neglect her. Thus tormented by her own thoughts, she paid dearly for the little ease his letter had given her. She knew not where to send any one to inquire after him; he not having mentioned the name of the place he was

was at when he wrote. Tho' her uneasiness was much the greatest, yet her friends, Lucinda, Julia, and Du Pré, felt a great deal. Lucinda's love of her brother increased her anxiety above what the rest felt. Julia's gratitude and love fixed her concern chiefly on Cornelia. Du Pré was uneasy for both, but much less than the other two, nature having given him a heart of a less sensible mould. Bernardo had written to Madame De La Roche at the same time he did to Cornelia, and from what he said of the place he was at, and the knowledge she had of the country, she guessed where he was when he had wrote. But as he had declared his intention of going to his uncle, she was surprized to find by a letter from him, that he had been disappointed in his expectation of seeing his nephew, and had heard nothing of him for some time.

Henrietta's passion raised many fears in her on this occasion; but she soon found a more dreadful tormentor than ever. Her servant, by some things she had overheard Cornelia say, had conceived suspicions of her love for Bernardo: she communicated the discovery to her mistress. Jealousy is easily raised in a slighted lover. She now began to suspect the fondness he had shewn for Lucinda. His frequent visits and long stay in her apartment, his great cheerfulness and uncommon spirits, and every other thing which she had once viewed in a pleasing and flattering light, now served to heighten the rage of her jealousy. The pain this gave her greatly exceeded what she felt from the uncertainty about his welfare. For it hurt one of her vain and violent temper more, to believe that another was preferred to her, than that death had taken from him all power of choice.

Either way she was disappointed of her hopes of possessing him ; but by the one, every woman that loved him was reduced into the same melancholy state ; by the other, her sufferings would be increased by the happiness of a rival.

In this turbulent and painful state of mind, she determined by some stratagem to be convinced of the truth of her fears. When jealousy once gains admittance, it is with difficulty kept within any bounds. To satisfy this restless passion, she resolved to go to some place near the forest, and if she learned he was still in that neighbourhood, to try by a letter in a forged hand, as like Cornelia's as she could make it, to find out if she really was the beloved mistress. Madame De La Roche, to whom she communicated her intention, endeavoured to persuade her to lay it aside, by shewing her how probable it was that he had left the forest, and how improbable it was that any forged hand should pass upon him for her supposed rival's. But what persuasions can conquer love quickened by jealousy !

Henrietta would not give up her point ; and left her mother on pretence of making a visit to a relation who lived at a considerable distance. She went to a house near Madame Garre's, and found this to be the place where Bernardo had taken shelter, and still remained. She heard nothing to make her doubt of his good state of health. She then sent him a letter she had prepared in the following terms.

IF you ever loved one, whose constant affection may give her some right to claim a return, and who from your vows may be allowed

'lowed to put some trust in your constancy, you
 'will immediately try to relieve by your pre-
 'sence, the distress of her who is too much op-
 'pressed by sudden misfortunes, and too ill in
 'health to say more in this trembling hand,
 'than that as you alone can comfort her, she is
 'come to the inn in a village called —, in
 'hopes by the nearness of it to be immediately
 'blessed with a visit from you."

Henrietta gave her messenger orders not to de-
 liver this letter into any one's hands but Ber-
 nardo's. Her stratagem had the desired effect.
 He immediately supposed it came from Cornelia;
 and it filled him with the utmost grief and sur-
 prize. The company he was in when he re-
 ceived the letter, prevented his flying to her with
 the speed he would otherwise have used. But he
 dispatched the messenger immediately, to inform
 her that he would follow as soon as possible.

Henrietta now thought with pleasure on the
 disappointment the sight of her would give him.
 It gave her great joy to think of the pain, with
 which she should punish his insensibility. When
 he appeared, the pleasure which she expected to
 reap from it was but too complete. He flew into
 the room with the utmost impatience; but the
 sight of her fixed him like a statue: he could nei-
 ther advance nor retire. She enjoyed his disap-
 pointment some time; and then began to up-
 braid him for his ingratitude, in being so frightened
 by her presence, when he had been so impatient
 to see one who did not deserve his love so well.
 There were no sort of reproaches, with which
 her rage did not load him. His astonishment
 would have made him insensible to all, even tho'
 they

they had come from one for whom he had had a greater regard. But she soon discovered that her words could hurt him, if applied to detract from Cornelia. Henrietta told him, she found the cause of his indifference; that his soul was too mean to be captivated by any charms that were not to be found in a low state; that he loved easy pleasures, and whilst he had his convenient Cornelia, he would buy no other woman at so dear a price as that of his liberty.

Nothing but the defence of Cornelia could have forced an answer from him. He said her perfections would enoble any birth, whilst this boasted advantage could not, in his opinion, hide the smallest defect: that he should find more pride in being possessed of Cornelia, than in being the husband of an empress: and as for happiness, no other woman could give it him, now that he knew what perfection could be included in a female form: that he might have been more easily pleased before he had seen her, but that comparing others with her served only to convince him how little they deserved his love. He made his visit very short, and could not help telling Henrietta, that it was painful to him to find he had reason to hate one whom he had always esteemed and respected, altho' he could not love her.

Henrietta left to herself, found what cruel companions rage and jealousy are. Tormented by her own reflexions, it was some time before she thought of leaving the place where she was; but at length the fear of being discovered, made her return home, determined to make Cornelia share in her misery.

Madame De La Roche was as much exasperated as her daughter, tho' not so tenderly hurt.

Hurt. She would gladly have vented her rage directly on Cornelia. But Henrietta convinced her, that it was necessary to the revenge she had intended, that Cornelia should not apprehend her amour with Bernardo was suspected. In order to complete her design, she shewed openly the grief she felt in her heart, but seemed desirous to conceal the cause, and to declare very unwillingly, and but indirectly to Cornelia, that it was occasioned by a trial she had just made of Bernardo's disposition. She told her, that having suspected him of libertinism and fickleness, she had long been uneasy at the unconquerable passion she had for him; but had always been afraid of any inquiry that might turn her suspicions into a certainty, as she feared herself not capable of treating him as he deserved: but that his late absence had given her time to summon up resolution enough to venture an enquiry into the truth of her suspicions; and to determine, that if she found him what she apprehended, if she could not expel her love entirely, she would at least get so far the better of it, as never more to endeavour an union with such a man: that in consequence of this resolution, she had gone near to the place where she suspected him to be; and had inquired into the reasons of his long stay there: that she had been told, the charms of some of the neighbouring women made him unwilling to change his place of abode; and that he was caressed by all, and dispersed his favours very liberally amongst them. She added to this all the stories her invention could suggest, to shew how gayly he passed his time, and how general his gallantries were. She then told Cornelia, that being desirous of trying the truth of this account of his

his

his disposition still farther, she had written him a letter in a feigned hand, declaring a passion for him : that he had flown to her with all the eagerness of a lover, and came with all the ornaments of dress, and an air of the most perfect gallantry and greatest impatience in his countenance to the place she had appointed. But, added she, “ I can no more describe the disappointment that appeared in him, than the pain I felt at this conviction of his unworthiness to be beloved, at a time when he appeared most lovely. The arts of dress, the vivacity that the occasion and the way of life he led had inspired him with, added such invincible charms to a form always too pleasing, that I had scarce power enough over the tenderness of my heart to reproach him with his irregularities ; and it became more difficult by the manner in which he behaved to me. In pleading his excuse, he addressed me with an appearance of more affection than I had ever been blessed with from him. He begged me even with tenderness not to divulge the follies of his conduct ; assured me they were nothing but what the fixed esteem he felt for me might overcome. In short he drove away all my resentment. It soothed my love to observe any symptoms of the like in him, and I began to flatter myself with hopes to which my heart had been long a stranger. I began again to be possessed with all the infatuation of love, when a servant brought him a letter ; which, by the pleasure with which he received it, I guessed was a summons from some fair one. He immediately got up to take his leave, and left me touched to the soul, with being disappointed of the hope he had raised in me of having inspired him with some tenderness. I found the fear of
my

my resentment, and what seemed to weigh stronger with him, my declaring the manner of his conduct, were his inducements to appear more disposed to reward my constant love, and that the strain of gallantry he lived in made it easy to him to counterfeit. But how foolish am I, to expose my weakness to you, who have not by love, ever been taught to pity. Happy in a cold insensibility, you will despise me, for not at once banishing from my thoughts a man with whom I can hope for no happiness: one, whom my fortune may in time tempt to make me his property, but that nothing can fix to one object: a wanderer in his love, whom no ties can bind."

The real vexation Henrietta laboured under supplied her with tears, to add to the appearance of truth she gave to her story, by all the circumstances she could invent. Cornelia was thunder-struck with what she had heard. She knew neither how to doubt, nor how to believe. The good opinion she had of Bernardo would make her, at times, reject the whole story as a malicious fiction: at others, the many circumstances that concurred to make it credible, helped on the deceit. She was too bad a dissembler to listen to Henrietta without the most violent emotions. Lucinda could not believe so ill of her brother; and in order to clear up the matter, she inquired where he was. Henrietta told her, she wished she had not been weak enough to promise him not to tell it to any one; and had he not been called away, she feared she should not have been able to have refused to conceal the whole affair, which he was then begging her to do.

Cornelia was under too great anxiety to stay long with them. She retired to her bed; where
giving

giving way to her reflexions, she was divided betwixt absolute despair, and some glimmering of hope. She had always believed that truth and constancy were inherent in Bernardo. This opinion defended him well; but what could stand against the circumstances that seemed to confirm the truth of what Henrietta told her? In this anxious state of mind she remained for above a fortnight; every day adding to her suspicions by bringing her no news of Bernardo. Her rival saw, with pleasure, the decay of her health and spirits, which shewed her, at least, to be an equal sufferer. But Cornelia was more generous in her grief: she pitied Henrietta; and knowing by her own heart what a slighted lover must endure, felt true compassion for her, tho', indeed she herself was the much greater object of pity. The other had never known what it was to be happy: despair had been the companion of her love from its birth. But Cornelia had been blessed with the assurance of mutual love; she had enjoyed the pleasures of the purest tenderness; hers was like a fall from heaven; comparison with the past, added a bitterness to her grief, that the other could not feel.

Thus she suffered for more than a fortnight, when her anxiety was turned into a settled despair, by a letter Madame De La Roche received from Paris, informing her, that a suit was begun against Bernardo by Mademoiselle Garré, on a contract of marriage, which he had given her, and now refused to perform. This was notified in too certain a manner to leave the least doubt. Upon hearing this letter read Cornelia fainted away. Lucinda was little less affected on finding Bernardo so base. Henrietta saw, with some remorse

more and confusion, that she might have spared herself the trouble of her contrivance; since truth would have done all she could aim at. Her resentment against Bernardo had not made her so indifferent to him, as to let her remain unmoved on this occasion: but anger generally got the better of softer passions in her soul. Cornelia was so oppressed with sorrow, that she fell into a slow fever. Lucinda and Julia never left her; but could not attempt to administer any comfort to her. They were filled with grief and indignation to find Bernardo so void of honour, constancy, truth, and gratitude; and that so incomparable a woman should be the victim of his baseness.

Altho' Cornelia's mind could not be relieved, yet time and the strength of her constitution abated her fever. But she no sooner recovered, than Madame De La Roche, who had no farther motive to conceal her knowledge of Cornelia's love for Bernardo, and who was not satisfied with what this young Lady had already suffered, told her, that she was informed of the intrigue that had been carried on, and hinted the most infamous suspicions; adding, that a woman of such scandalous behaviour was not fit to be about her daughter, and therefore desired she would leave the house. This was not so severe a stroke to Cornelia, as it would have been in her happier time. Lucinda's and Julia's company was all that could now make the place tolerable to her. They were with her when Madame De La Roche gave vent to her rage and malice. Lucinda begged her not to deprive her of the most agreeable companion, and best guide she ever had. She said that till Cornelia had instructed her, she had

had but very imperfect notions of virtue; and that she could not but improve by the example of one who had nothing but virtues in her composition. She then used the most earnest entreaties, uttered in the most moving manner, to prevail on her mother to retain Cornelia, but without effect. Madame De La Roche left them abruptly, saying she was resolved, and that it would be a fruitless attempt to make any change in her resolution.

After some time spent in silent tears, Cornelia began to lament her being thus forced to leave Lucinda and Julia. "Am I," says she, "to enjoy no pleasures, but such as must in a short time be turned into regret! how happy have love and friendship made me for this last year; and now, alas! the object of the one has forsaken me, and I am to be driven from all the comfort the other might afford me. I am again involved in misery, far beyond what I have ever yet felt. The aspersions thrown on my character, I bear better than what is made their consequence. You, whose good opinions are of most importance to me, know my innocence. If others think differently of me, a good conscience shall be my consolation. Tho' a clear reputation will be always dear to me, yet it was once more necessary to me than now, that I am determined to retire entirely from the world." She then assured Julia, that no absence should make her forget her, and hoped she would not let it alter the friendship with which she had hitherto been favoured. She begged Julia to continue the obligation she had already conferred on her, by accepting a part of her income, saying she
looked

looked upon the acceptance as a right which she would not relinquish.

Julia and Lucinda were inexpressibly moved with the consideration of parting from Cornelia, at a time when melancholy made her so little fit to be left to herself; and the last thing she said to Julia determined this lady to accompany her. She told Cornelia, she could not consent to let it be in Madame De La Roche's power to bring such a misfortune on her, as a separation from the truest friend she had ever met with; that however grieved she should be to part with Lucinda, she could not think of letting Cornelia live alone in the present state of her mind. If she could not relieve her sufferings, she would at least have the satisfaction of attempting it. Cornelia was unwilling to take Julia out of the tranquillity in which she lived, and put it again in fortune's power to involve her in new difficulties. But she was so resolved on being the partner of Cornelia's future fortune, that all opposition was to no purpose. Poor Lucinda now saw herself on the point of being deprived of her two friends, and left with a mother and sister who never loved her, and who would make her feel the effects of their malice to Cornelia; as they could not doubt of Lucinda's having been fully acquainted with every thing that related to her amour with Bernardo. The grief and agitation Lucinda felt on this melancholy occasion could not be pacified. Her affections were very strong, and she was too young to have been broken to the disappointments, to which those who have lived longer are often accustomed. When night drew on, and that she was obliged to appear before her mother, her friends took leave of her. Cornelia went home with

with Julia, but not without making Lucinda promise to spend as much time with them as she would be permitted to do, during the few days they must remain in the village, to complete Cornelia's recovery and enable her to travel.

Madame De La Roche's thoughts were so much taken up, that she did not regard Lucinda enough to lay any restriction upon her. She soon received information, that the contract on which Bernardo was sued would not be deemed binding; and that a little time would clear him of that affair. Her desire that he should not be married, as she still hoped he might grow better disposed to her daughter if he remained disengaged, had suspended the effects of her anger, and prevented her from withdrawing the revenue she allowed him. But she no sooner heard that the cause was going to be decided in his favour, than she determined to let him see the consequence of slighting Henrietta. She stopped all his usual remittances; and to prevent his receiving any assistance from Lucinda, she resolved to send her to a convent, on pretence of finishing her education. Accordingly, the day before Cornelia and Julia were to leave the neighbourhood, Madame De La Roche ordered her daughter to prepare herself for the convent, to which she intended to carry her the next day.

As much as Lucinda had feared living with such a mother and sister, the sound of a convent filled her with terror. She was apprehensive they might intend to force her to take the vows, and that way of life was but ill suited to the gaiety of her disposition. Her taste was mirth, friendship, and reading; and she had heard too much of convents to expect any such enjoyments in
those

those places. She had a considerable share of religion, but not of that sort which represents amusement as a crime, and which holds it sinful to read any thing not written on some pious subject. The improvement of her understanding she thought a duty ; and that the more it was cultivated, the more capable she would be of paying the proper worship to her Maker, and of feeling the gratitude due to him for the many blessings bestowed on her.

She immediately went to Julia's house to communicate the order she had received, and the resolution her mother had taken about Bernardo. She hoped for some useful advice from her friends, or at least that she should there have the comfort of seeing those who would take an unfeigned share in her affliction. She was not disappointed of the relief she expected. Her friends were sensibly touched with this additional vexation. Cornelia desired her not to afflict herself with any apprehensions of being detained in the convent: that in case of such violence, she would be justified in taking any honest means of avoiding it, and would be sure of finding a quiet refuge with her. Cornelia added, that nature and fortune had both seemed to intend Lucinda as an ornament to the world ; but if that intention was to be frustrated, and that she must be secluded from it, she had better enjoy liberty in obscurity and retirement, than be confined to the rules invented by mad founders, and enforced by peevish abbesses. Cornelia and Julia both assured her, that they would receive her with open arms, and would do all that lay in their power to assist her escape, if what she feared was more immediately to threaten her. They promised to stay in the village

village till they could learn to what convent Madame De La Roche had carried her; and that if the place was solitary enough to suit Cornelia's disposition of mind, they would fix as near to Lucinda as possible; that they might thereby have opportunities of conversing together, as much as the rules of the house would permit.

By these assurances and promises, Lucinda became more easy. Cornelia then gave her a direction to Madame Du Maine, from whom she would be sure of receiving her letters; and Lucinda took leave of her friends with the utmost tenderness, and received the most unfeigned marks of their affection. Next morning Lucinda set out with Madame De La Roche; and felt less concern in travelling to the convent, than what she had felt upon the first news of the threatened journey.

Altho' Bernardo's inconstancy had determined Cornelia to avoid the sight of him, yet she was still anxious for his welfare, and could not think without great concern on the difficulties he might be under from Madame De La Roche's cruelty. Despair had taken the place of hope, or rather happy certainty, in her heart. But she accused human nature, and not Bernardo. She pitied his weaknesses, and grieved they had been so long concealed as to make the misfortune fall heavier on her. She endured her own misery without murmuring, and would gladly have contributed to his happiness, tho' he had destroyed hers. She retained no sense of pleasure so strongly, as that of being of any service to him, who she believed had one fault given him that he alone might not be perfect in this imperfect state. It was such a fault indeed as must make her

her fly him for ever; but could not make her hate him. As he was a man, she thought that she ought to have expected to have found in him, some of the weaknesses incident to the rest of mankind; and therefore blamed her own inconsiderate hopes with the disappointment under which she now laboured.

These were her reflections on a point wherein most women are implacable. She unburthened her heart to Julia, and begged her to find out some means of enabling her to convey money to Bernardo, without his knowing from whence it came. She thought herself the last person he could suspect, as his conscience must shew him that there was no one from whom he deserved less consideration. Julia told Cornelia, she could with ease assist her, having a friend in Paris who might be trusted with any sum she chose to remit to Bernardo. This was a great relief to Cornelia's mind. She grieved the less for any distress that threatened him, when she found it in her power to assist him. It would, perhaps, be commending her too far to say, that pride had certainly no share in the satisfaction she felt. If one we have loved uses us ill, we feel perhaps more pleasure in behaving generously to them, from a consciousness of the superiority it gives us over them: but it would be no dishonour to her, if we supposed that such considerations had any weight with her.

Cornelia stayed, according to the promise she had given Lucinda, till Madame De La Roche came home, and till she had got information from one of her servants, whose attachment to Cornelia got the better of her lady's orders, in what convent Madame De La Roche had deposited

G

her

her charge. Cornelia and Julia then began their journey, intending to meet Madame Du Maine at the town where she and Cornelia had last spent a little time together. The expectation of seeing this first of friends and greatest of benefactors, who had given her the power of making Julia's life easy, and of sending relief to Bernardo, gave Cornelia all the pleasure she was then capable of enjoying. Madame Du Maine was punctual to the time appointed. And she insisted on Cornelia's going home with her for some time, as she thought this now might be done without any danger. A very little observation was sufficient to shew Madame Du Maine that Julia would be an agreeable addition to the company, so that she was also strongly invited, and with pleasure complied.

Madame Du Maine's family was increased since Cornelia left it. Mr. Du Maine, her grandson, who had begun his travels immediately on being reconciled to her, was returned home, and by his company much enlivened the family. He was more fit to create mirth, than inspire love or esteem. He was so various and unstable, that it would have been hard to have seen any one quality long enough in him, to form a judgment of the return it deserved. Mr. Du Maine's person was bad, his face was plain, but had an air of ridicule in it that increased the drollery of his humour, tho' it wanted no assistance. He had a considerable share of wit, and was good humoured and open in company. He was generally said to have a prodigious share of vivacity; but herein his judges spoke rather favourably than accurately. A quickness of thought and readiness of expression, joined with good animal spirits, properly

perly constitute vivacity, which certainly goes far in rendering a man agreeable. But Mr. Du Maine had rather a quick temper, which made his words and actions so far out-run his reflections, that he scarce allowed himself time to think. He seemed governed by a kind of instinct ; with this difference, that he had all the inattention of that gift, tho' none of its infallibility. Thus without the necessary guides either of the human, or the brute creation, he seemed governed only by chance, under whose blind conduct his wit became often unseasonable, sometimes gave pain to others, and sometimes ridicule to himself. He was said to be disinterested, but this quality was more properly a want of thought in him than a virtue. His sincerity seemed rather the love of talking than that of truth. What goodness of temper he had, arose chiefly from a careless and inconstant mind, that could not think of any one thing long enough to be deeply affected with it. All the other virtues he seemed to have, were infected with the same taint. Real good qualities can only arise in a rational mind, where reason confirms and improves what a good natural disposition first gave birth to. Tho' Mr. Du Maine was not amiable, yet almost every one allowed him to be entertaining, and the contrast between his character, and the insincere, insinuating complaisance, and designing regularity of behaviour of his sister and brother-in-law, was very amusing. He would often expose their dissimulation with great wit and humour : tho' without any view of lessening them in Madame Du Maine's favour.

This lady, in whom age had not banished vivacity, was greatly diverted with her grandson. She had long known the true nature of Mr. and

Madame De Limon, and was not sorry to observe the uneasiness they felt on being discovered and exposed. The perfect knowledge of them had extinguished all her love for them, which however was still placed on three fine children they had, whose education she took upon herself, in hopes of making them very different from their parents. As this charge was more a serious employment than an amusement, Mr. Du Maine's company was a great pleasure to her; especially, as she flattered herself that if he would remain with her during her life, he would be safe from committing any very imprudent actions, and that before that term was expired, time must have made such alterations in him as would render him more fit to be intrusted with the care of himself. To make her house the more agreeable to him, she invited the company she thought he most liked, invented or encouraged such amusements as might tempt him to stay, and winked at the little irregularities she could not cure.

Cornelia was much pleased to find her friend so happy. Her natural vivacity was not so entirely conquered, but that Mr. Du Maine's wit would sometimes make it break forth for a few minutes. But the constant spirits he enjoyed, so ill agreed with the melancholy that preyed on her mind, that she resolved not to prolong her stay beyond what she had at first intended. Madame Du Maine on her part was grieved to find Cornelia had received such disappointments; and disapproved of the solitude she was going to as it might fix her melancholy; but she found her choice unalterable. Mr. Du Maine had often heard her mentioned, and found she exceeded description. He was greatly delighted with her;
and

and it was observed, she was the first object that ever made him think. But this effect was of short duration, for tho' it was apparent she had made some impression on him, yet absence effaced it in a short time. Madame Du Maine, finding she must part with Cornelia, resolved not to let her go without fresh marks of her affection. She made a very considerable addition to the fortune she had already given her; telling her, she should be sorry not to make her immediately easy in circumstances; and that she loved her too well to defer any thing by which she could contribute towards her happiness, till death had taken from herself all power of enjoyment.

With a sincere concern on both sides, they parted. Cornelia and Julia set out for the province where Lucinda was, in hopes of finding some place to fix in near her. At night as they were sitting together in the inn, Cornelia heard a voice, which tho' not new to her, she did not immediately recollect. But looking out of the window, saw Mr. De Rhone. He perceived her at the same time. Their joy and surprise was great. She had always retained the highest esteem for him; and tho' he had got the better of his passion, yet he still felt the most perfect admiration, and pure affection for her.

After Cornelia and Mr. De Rhone had expressed the satisfaction they found in seeing each other so unexpectedly, he inquired where she and her fair friend were going. Her answer was, that she scarce knew; she was in search of a place of perfect retirement, and hoped to find it in ——. She added, that she was induced to prefer that province to any other, by having a friend placed in a convent in the farther part of

it. Mr. De Rhone told her, he was rejoiced to hear it, and could accommodate her with great ease, having a very good house at a little distance from the convent she mentioned; but said, he could not guess what should make her desirous to seclude herself from the world, unless her regard for the rest of her sex had made her unwilling to eclipse them, and resolve, as the only means of avoiding it, to shut herself up from all mankind. He politely added, that she would thereby do another act of compassion, as she would avoid inspiring all the men with love who knew her, and thus prevent the unhappiness resulting from her cruelty, which was so much the greater, as the manner in which she forbid them to love her was so charming, that it could not fail of fixing their affections. He owned she was thus far to be justified, that no one could reasonably expect a more favourable treatment from her, as she was a blessing beyond the desert of any man.

Cornelia was at this time so unhappily sensible how far she was from the indifference with which Monsieur De Rhone had charged her, and that she retired from mankind for reasons very contrary to those which he had politely assigned, that she could not confine the tears that forced their way. This excited Mr. De Rhone's curiosity and compassion, and made him desirous of knowing what had happened to her, since he left France. Cornelia told him, she could not refuse any thing to one she had been so much obliged to; and accordingly related every circumstance of her misfortunes. She ended with saying, that her last disappointment was the reason of her resolution of spending her life in solitude. "You see," says she, "that want of charms is
what

what has reduced me to it. Had not other women been able to eclipse me, I might have lived happy and beloved. How much more pleasing must they have been, since they could banish me out of a heart, which had tried the constancy and tenderness of my affection. There are qualities that must have defended the heart of a man of sense against charms that were not much superior to mine. Since I know the greatness of his understanding, it is my own demerit I must accuse. I am here shewing how little I have of that pride by which our sex are generally governed. I own myself slighted and forsaken, own that I still love the man who has brought upon me the unhappiness I at present feel; and that I fly from society, because I ought not to see the only object my eyes can with pleasure behold. I can never cease loving him, tho' I think better of myself than to imagine, it could ever make me give up any of the dignity our sex ought to preserve. I will fly him, and punish my heart for its want of spirit and resentment. You see I feel more than I have ever inflicted, and have felt it long enough to be persuaded it is not to be conquered."

Tho' Mr. De Rhone had received all the benefit of his endeavours to get the better of his passion for her, yet where so much esteem and admiration subsists, love is soon recalled. He would have been glad to have conceived some hope; but she added so many things that served to discourage the rise of any, as put an end to his, and made him resolve to repress every thought of that kind. The account Cornelia had given of her misfortune had so far affected her spirits, that Mr. De Rhone's and Julia's endeavours to divert her thoughts from such painful objects, had but little effect.

effect. At length, however, she recovered herself so far as to desire Monsieur De Rhone to tell her how his time had passed, and where he had been since they parted. Julia begged him to answer Cornelia circumstantially, in hopes it might bring some relief to her mind. The motive was too good not to have all power over him, and he readily complied.

“ When with angelic compassion and goodness,” said he, “ you advised me to try absence as a cure for the love you could not return, I left you more enchanted with your charms than ever. In every way I saw you superior to all your sex. I felt that superiority too tenderly, and therefore resolved to conquer all sentiments but those I ought to have for you. I was conscious it was presumption to love you. You had a right to be esteemed and admired, and to every sentiment short of adoration. I was sure you must be the best guide in every circumstance of life, and therefore I followed your advice, and immediately left France, to try what absence and despair could do towards my relief. I went to Italy, and travelled from town to town, without finding any object that could expel you a moment from my mind. Sometimes I recollected the astonishment your beauty threw me into when I first saw you; how it was increased by your innocence, your unaffected virtue and your fear. Every action of yours, after you were out of that detestable house, appeared as fresh to me as if it had that moment happened. The admiration I was filled with as your understanding opened on me, your extensive comprehension, your justness of thought, the quickness of your discernment, the scope of your learning, your shyness of discovering it;
your

your wit and vivacity, all had their share in charming me ; but nothing fixed my love so much as that transcendent goodness which shone forth in every thought and action. Sometimes I reflected on the happiness I enjoyed in your conversation, and the confidence, ease, and friendship, with which you treated me. But soon would follow the cruel moment when you refused my love, and banished me my native country. This brought grief, but never could raise resentment. You had set me a hard task ; I was to conquer my love, yet was sensible I could never cease to admire and esteem you. After my person had travelled some time, tho' my thoughts never wandered, and had scarce left Paris even for a moment, I was told, the carnival was going to begin at Rome. I determined to try what effect that time of mirth would have on my spirits, and accordingly travelled to that city.

One of the first things that struck my attention there was my landlady's daughter, who seemed overwhelmed with the greatest melancholy at that time of general rejoicing. Her mother seemed much touched with her distress ; and as I took little part of the jollity that was going forwards, I had time to remark the resemblance between this girl's state of mind and my own. A similitude in misery makes one naturally inquisitive after the cause, and desirous to give relief. Many days had not passed before I inquired into the reason of what I saw, of the mother. She told me, that her daughter had been long engaged to marry a young man in their neighbourhood : that the love had been mutual, and their circumstances pretty equal, till a relation died who

left enough to the young man's father, to set them much above her in fortune : that upon this acquisition his parents insisted on his breaking off all engagements with her daughter, as he might now pretend to a more advantageous alliance : that this had almost broken the hearts of both the young people ; and that for her part, she feared the consequence of a grief that had already deprived her of all the comfort she had before found in this darling daughter."

" I found," said Mr. De Rhone, " a few hundred pounds would restore the equality in which they had been so happy, and enable them by a speedy marriage to put an end to all fears of another separation. I had taken care to procure myself credit for any sum of money I should want to draw for ; so I went to the young man's parents, and having by the offer of a sum, which by the addition of what the young woman's mother would give her, contented them ; I got all their consents to the match, and saw the young couple as happy as the completion of their wishes could make them. Tho' this made a great noise at Rome, I should not have mentioned it, were it not that I am sure nothing can appear trifling to you which contributes to the happiness of others, and that this affair gave rise to another which I am going to relate.

One day in the midst of the carnival, I observed a woman whom, by her shape and air, I guessed to be young, sitting in a very melancholy posture. The uncommonness of this sight, in such a place, tempted me to go up to her. I told her, I was surprized to see any one so untouched with the mirth all around her ; that the disguise she wore was generally used to con-

ceal the face, only to give liberty to the heart to yield itself up more freely to pleasure." "Pleasure," says she, "has nothing to do with my heart, it has long been a wished-for guest, but keeps far from it. I wear this dress as much to hide my heart as my face; tho' I find that cannot be done from your penetration." I asked her, who could cruelly inflict sorrow on one who, if I might judge by her air, might have hoped to have escaped it many years? "There is no age," said she, "exempt from misfortunes; if any had that privilege, I might expect to be exempted from grief by my youth, but this only serves to make me more unhappy, as it must naturally prolong my sufferings, unless my constitution be overcome by them, and death, my only wish, hasten to my relief."

"I was sincerely touched," continued Mr. De Rhone, "with the situation in which she appeared to be; I asked her, whether it was in the power of one, who would with his utmost endeavours assist her, to relieve her distress; and as I was pressing this offer, an acquaintance came by, and called me by my name. Compassion had engaged me too strongly, to suffer me to make him any answer. But she, looking stedfastly on me, said, "if you are Mr. DeRhone, perhaps you will have generosity enough to do me some service: at least, if that is beyond your power, I can trust you with my grief; and your advice may do me good. I have heard such instances of your virtues, that I cannot but trust to whatever you say." I begged she would tell me if there was any thing wherein I could be of use to her, and assured her it would give me great pleasure. "You little think," says she, "that with

the small joy I seem to receive in this place, I should have run such hazards in coming here, as you will find I do, when I tell you, I am a probationer at the next convent. As some sort of excuse for myself, I must trouble you with a short account of my past life."

" I am daughter to a gentleman of a large fortune, who lives near Ravenna ; I was bred up at home with great indulgence, till I had the misfortune to lose my mother. I was then put under the care of an old governess, from whom I often suffered all that the peevishness of age could add to a bad temper. But these small circumstances are not worth mentioning ; and I shall pass them over, to inform you of the cause of the uneasiness you have observed in me. A young gentleman, who was a neighbour of ours, and younger son to one of my father's friends, had been a frequent visiter to my brother, from the time that we all three were children. At first we loved each other as play-fellows ; as we grew older our affection strengthened, till at last it became as strong as it was mutual. The fear of our parents made us conceal it, but the frequent opportunities we had of seeing each other, gave us all the pleasures that with virtue we could enjoy from a reciprocal tenderness. In this state of happiness we lived till I arrived at my eighteenth year. Lorenzo, my lover, was about five years older than myself. We had scarce considered of the difficulty we should find, in bringing our parents to consent to an union between us. We were so well contented with the frequent opportunities of conversation we enjoyed, and the assurances of the true affection we had for each other, that we waited without anxiety for the
time

time when we might hope to be united ; and not fearing a separation, we thought little of any thing farther. But the fatal period of our felicity was come. One day when Lorenzo returned home, after having spent a week at our house, he found his father had been taken suddenly ill that morning, and his life was then judged in great danger. The next day ended it, his distemper increasing as fast as it begun violently. Lorenzo, who loved his father tenderly, was much grieved. His love made him fly to me for relief, as soon as decency would permit him to leave the house. I could not see concern in him without sharing it, and I had the satisfaction of seeing that I abated his grief. His father left him a fortune that would have afforded us a competence ; which to those that love as we did, is the utmost their wishes extend to. But we knew that my father, by his age and disposition, was much more sensible of the value of money, than of the consequences of a mutual affection to our happiness ; and that he would not be so easily contented. This made us defer our expectations of marriage, till he had increased his paternal fortune by his industry. This often carried him from me, which seemed a heavier stroke on us than even the deferring our hopes of an union. But we did not remain long, without finding there were still much greater evils in store for us.

Lorenzo's elder brother was brought home from his travels, by his father's death. He came to our house to pay his respects to his father's friend. Unfortunately his taste bore too much resemblance to his brother's, and without our suspecting it, he became his rival. The first knowledge we had of it, was from my father,

of

of whom he had asked me, after that a few visits had confirmed his suddenly-conceived love. His fortune was so considerable that he met with a very favourable answer. My father came immediately to my chamber, and told me, I must receive the son of his deceased friend as one who, in a very short time, was to be my husband : that it was a match he was happy in, as the merit of my lover, and his affection for me, gave the fairest prospects of my happiness ; and that he was particularly pleased with it, for the regard he should always feel for every branch of his friend's family. Lorenzo being the only object of my thoughts, and I having no suspicions of his brother's love, it is not to be wondered at if I supposed my father meant Lorenzo. I imagined that friendship for the father had prevailed in the son's favour ; and I received the proposal with such joy and gratitude, that it greatly surprized my father ; who told me, he was glad to find his inclination and mine agreed so well, and bid me come down to entertain my lover. How great was my astonishment, when my father leading me up to Lorenzo's brother, gave him my hand, telling him, that love had done his part so well, he had left nothing for obedience to do !—The pleasure this speech gave my new lover was as great almost as the pain I felt from my disappointment, but had not quite such violent consequences. For my part, I was so overcome that I fainted away, but was soon brought out of that happy insensibility. My father expressed his surprize at the greatness of my passion, which in so short a time could make me receive his hand with such excess of joy. I was not able to make my answer to all the transports of
love

love and gratitude which my lover uttered. I was incapable of supporting the interview, and therefore begged leave to retire. My disorder being looked upon as the effect of my love, nothing I asked could be refused; but it was with great difficulty I went unaccompanied.

When I was left to myself, my tears gave me some relief. I resolved to write a note to Lorenzo, to appoint him to my chamber after the rest of the family were asleep. It was conceived in such terms as served sufficiently to alarm him, tho' he could not thereby guess at the occasion of my trouble. He came in obedience to my summons. It is impossible to express his different emotions when I told him what had passed, and how I had at once been thrown down from excess of joy to the most cruel despair. Some hours passed in lamentations on our hard fate; and before we could determine on the way to put an end to this match, day began to appear. All we could agree upon before we parted, was, to meet the next night, and consult, when our minds were a little calmed by reflection; and that to avoid seeing either my father, or the husband he was desirous of giving me, I should feign myself too sick to see any one, even in my chamber. This was executed as we had concerted. I kept my bed till night; and when every one else in the family was gone to rest, I, with some difficulty, prevailed on my servant to leave me, and retire to sleep.

I then got up and dressed myself to receive Lorenzo, who came with all the impatience of a lover, anxious for his own and for his mistress's fate. We agreed to declare the truth; and to inform my father of the long affection we had felt.

felt for each other ; of my mistake of the proposal he made me ; and of my resolution to give my hand to none but him who had so long had possession of my heart. Lorenzo, on his part, was to give my father an account of his fortune ; of his readiness to use his utmost endeavours to improve it in any way that should be thought most adviseable ; to assure my father of the perfect obedience he would pay him, and of the grateful sense he should always retain of my father's goodness, in consenting to his happiness. We agreed to tell him, how well we could be contented with Lorenzo's small paternal fortune, even tho' it should never be increased. We resolved to add our most earnest intreaties, and to conjure him by his paternal love, and the friendship which seemed to survive the death of his friend, and extend itself to his children, to give his consent, the only thing wanting to establish our felicity.

As the success of our intended endeavours was extremely uncertain, our grief and fears were not much abated by our resolution. We neither of us had strength to hide a despondency each wished to conceal from the other. We mingled our sighs and tears, and in doubt whether we should ever meet again, we were indulging ourselves in a farewell caress. His arms were round me, I was weeping in his bosom ; both senseless with grief, and blinded with tears, we were roused by a noise, and saw my father, his sword drawn in his hand, and running towards me. The death he threatened was not so terrible to me as his anger ; since I feared from it the loss of Lorenzo, without whom life would be the heaviest of misfortunes. Lorenzo put himself between me and my father, and received the

the

the blow on his arm. This turned my terror into distraction. I grew quite frantick ; but Lorenzo tried to appease me, by assuring me, the hurt was trifling, and gave him the highest pleasure, as it had saved me from danger.

He then began to tell my father the occasion of our meeting, and spoke in the manner we had concerted he should, in case this unfortunate discovery had not been made. Finding him able to hold so long a discourse, my terror began to subside a little. I had presence of mind enough to bind up his wounded arm while he was speaking ; and I found courage to perform my part, in the manner we had agreed. There were no intreaties we did not use to bring my father to compliance. We were both upon our knees before him, weeping, and begging with the most passionate earnestness ; but to no effect. We could not even disarm his countenance of any of the rage painted in it when we beheld him first."

" As for you," says he to Lorenzo, " I would revenge this insult on my honour with your life, did not your father's image live in you. But I must exact from you, that you never appear in my sight again. In my daughter's, I shall take care you never shall. For I will instantly convey her to a convent, where the rigidness of the order shall preserve her honour and mine better than she is disposed to do. I am not to be imposed upon by a feigned tale. And were it truth, I am in my senses, tho' you are not, and shall not let you thus run head-long into misery. Love is one of the play-things of youth, and cast away in a maturer age as well as the rest of its baubles. If she chooses poverty, she shall go where it is a duty to bear it. Where without possessions she
can

can never want, or have the power of bringing dishonour or a beggarly offspring into my family."

I could not contend with a father in his wrath. Lorenzo cried out, Wound me not, Sir, more by your words than you could have done with your sword: they are sharper, and cut me in a more sensible part. You cannot do your daughter the injustice to believe she could ever offend against virtue. It would be strange if, being her father, you should know her so little; therefore I shall leave her former conduct, truth, and the innocence so strongly and beautifully imprinted on her countenance, to answer that part of your discourse. All I shall attempt to say, is, to beg you will not confine her in a convent. Why will you rob yourself of the best of daughters, and make the life you have given her a curse? If you will take a milder course, you shall banish me to any part of the globe. I will never stir from it, nor attempt to see my native country, nor, what is much dearer to me, your daughter, if you will but let her enjoy that liberty to which all mankind have a right, and which none so well deserves as herself.

All he could say was to no purpose. My father refused to mitigate his sentence on any other terms than my accepting the husband he had chosen for me. This condition raised a spirit in me I had not hitherto felt. I told him, I would prefer death to the being false to my vows, my own heart, and my happiness; and that if I could not remain in the world but by consenting to my own misery, I was ready to retire from it. But as I could never cease loving Lorenzo, I would

would not consent to enter into any state that should make that love a crime.

Lorenzo was distracted with the thought of having brought that misfortune on me. I tried to comfort him by assuring him, that if I might not be his, all places would be alike to me ; and that a cell could not be more solitary to me than the most crowded palace would be whilst he was absent. My father enraged to the utmost, and finding our love made us forget his presence, and that the noise in my chamber had raised the whole family, ordered his coach to be got ready immediately, and commanded my servant to pack up my necessary apparel. In the mean time, Lorenzo and I snatched one short embrace, vowed endless constancy, and everlasting, tho' unsuccessful, love. My father's return obliged Lorenzo to leave the room. But I found he had not gone far off, for I saw him in a window near us when I followed my father to the coach, which was but too soon ready. We took leave of each other with our eyes. Our tears flowed afresh, and we were past speaking.

In this condition I was led to the coach, and brought to a convent in this city, more dead than alive. The grief I was in produced many tiresome exhortations from most, and pity from a few ; especially the portress of the convent, whose kindness and conversation have given me all the consolation I have been capable of receiving. The continual sorrow with which she saw me filled, and the aversion she found I had to being fixed in that place, made her wish to know the cause of my distress, and to attempt my relief. She told me one day, that if I would trust her, I should find that any services that were in her power

power should follow the confidence. The pleasure of unburthening my heart made me comply with her desire, rather than hope that relief could reach me in such a place. I related to her all that had passed, and found in her much more compassion, than I could have expected from one of a society who seem excluded from every thing that can inspire tenderness.

She told me, that tho' she had been bred up there from her infancy, yet she owned her natural disposition was too strong to be conquered by habit: that she had never been able to enjoy happiness in that way of life; and tho' by never having known the world, she could not regret it, yet the utmost she had ever been able to arrive at was an insipid ease: that since she who had seen nothing better could not like the place, she could easily imagine how any one must suffer in it, who had been torn from the pleasures of the world, and the most darling objects of her affection: that if she could give me any assistance in delivering me from it, it would give her more pleasure than she had received since her coming into the convent; tho' she should thereby lose a companion she liked better than any that she had ever seen admitted into their house.

Tho' I saw no means of receiving the benefit that her good will wished to give me, as I could not venture an escape by myself, for fear of being unable to conceal myself, and of being brought back again to worse usage, and a blemished character; yet it gave me some pleasure to find there was one so interested in my fate. You may imagine my gratitude made me overflow with thanks. But I told her, unable as I was to get Lorenzo's assistance, I could not put her goodness

to the trial. She said she was sensible of that difficulty ; but if I thought there was any chance of his coming to the carnival, she would take care to let me out for a day, and receive me in again without being found out.

People in despair catch at the smallest possibilities. Tho' the chance of his coming here, the place I was confined to being a secret to him, was very small, yet I joyfully accepted her offer. When you came up to me, I had sat down in despair of seeing him ; and was reflecting on the little grounds I had ever to hope it. Your name encouraged me to make this confession of the state of my unhappy heart. The generosity with which you united two separated lovers, reached the ears even of those who seem dead to the world and buried in oblivion. I flatter myself with the hopes, that if in your tour you have come thro' Ravenna, and seen Lorenzo, you will inform me of it ; and perhaps assist me in sending a letter to him, as I have no one else in whom I can confide."

" This history," continued Mr. De Rhone, " filled me with compassion. I never liked convents, which seemed to me calculated to make numbers really miserable, and only to hide from the world that they were so. I could never suppose, that God had given us talents to exercise many duties necessary to the happiness of the community, and yet had ordained that the surest way for the attainment of salvation should be shutting ourselves up from the world, and neglecting all the duties for which we were qualified. My dislike to the establishment of convents is not greater than my pity for numbers, who either by the cruelty of their parents are forced,

forced, or by the allurements of some who pretend to be their friends are inticed, or by ignorance and prejudice are tempted, to enter into those houses. Places from whence, like the realms of death, no one returns; where hope ne'er comes that comes at all, but constant regret and repining melancholy dwells in almost every heart. With such notions you will easily believe I wished to deliver the unhappy lady from her prison. I told her, if she would write to Lorenzo, I would send a person with her letter, who should deliver it into his hands, wherever he was to be found; and that I would first send to Ravenna, as the most probable place to meet with, or hear of him. Her joy and her acknowledgments were beyond expression. No condemned criminal, on the point of execution, ever received his pardon with such extasies. We went into a room, where she got pen and ink, and wrote in the following terms.

‘ IF Lorenzo be as constant as he is dear to me,
 ‘ he will partake of the joy with which my
 ‘ heart now overflows. In my present trans-
 ‘ ports I am scarce able to tell you the cause of
 ‘ them, and yet it is not very complicated. It
 ‘ is the result of the hope that now is infused in-
 ‘ to my heart, of being once more blessed with
 ‘ your presence; and if absence has not altered
 ‘ you, of being united too securely to be ever
 ‘ again separated by human power. Who could
 ‘ expect me to contain my joy, if they knew the
 ‘ despair I have been under since we parted, of
 ‘ ever seeing you again! The most generous of
 ‘ men has undertaken to convey this to you. If
 ‘ you love me you will return with the messenger,
 ‘ and

‘ and when I can form any probable scheme for
 ‘ my escape, you shall know it. I am in a state
 ‘ of mind too much above tranquillity to write
 ‘ more, even tho’ I had time. Oh, Lorenzo!
 ‘ what have I suffered since I saw you! and yet,
 ‘ how well does hope in this moment repay me!
 ‘ Adieu. My health attend you, and a thorough
 ‘ belief that, if you please, I am ever yours.

Having got this letter, I assured her, I would
 send it directly, and that I did not mean this
 should be all I would do for her service. I would
 assist her lover in any way that could be con-
 trived for her escape; and accompany them, till
 the sacred bands had made them inseparable. She
 returned me all the thanks that a grateful heart,
 elated with the most pleasing hope, could inspire.
 I begged her to lift up her veil; she readily com-
 plied, and shewed me a very pretty face, in which
 all the tenderness and softness of her soul was
 painted. Her charms, tho’ not exquisite, were
 very attracting; and a man whose heart had not
 been well guarded could not have beheld them
 with impunity. She retired to her convent, after
 we had agreed, that I should inform her, by the
 bride who owed her happiness to me, of the
 success of our scheme.

I continued pursuing the diversions of the car-
 nival, till my servant returned, who told me,
 that Lorenzo was come with him, and was in
 my antichamber. I went to him, and finding
 his curiosity to know how I came to be charged
 with his mistress’s commands, was not quite easy
 to him, I related all that had passed between us.
 Lorenzo was pleased with the account I gave
 him; expressed great gratitude for what I had
 done

done for them, and for the offer I made of the continuance of my services ; but begged his mistress might be immediately informed of his arrival. I carried him to the bride I mentioned, whom he charged with a line, expressing the greatness of his joy at finding her love the same as ever, and circumstances so much more favourable. He begged her to communicate to him what means she had imagined for her escape, and assured her, that however dangerous they might seem, he would execute them with inexpressible joy, animated with the hopes of possessing her, without whom life was the heaviest misfortune.

The bride soon brought us back word, that the lady would meet us the next night at the back gate of the convent. All that was to follow for their security she left to us ; but desired we would also provide for a companion who was determined to share her fortune. Lorenzo was too much elevated to attend to the necessary precautions, so I took the charge on me, promising not to leave them till I saw them in a place of security, and united for life. This I thought a duty. I was the contriver of her escape ; I knew not Lorenzo's private character, but knew that men in general were not always fit to be trusted on such occasions. And as I intended to deliver her from slavery, I was also determined to secure her from infamy, and the eternal regret the falseness of a man whom her kindness had so strongly obliged, might bring upon her. Indeed I saw nothing in him to inspire me with this caution ; but knowledge of the particular man should alone preserve us from the fear we have reason to have of mankind in general. What we have seen of the
Species

species must direct us, till we are perfectly well acquainted with the individual.

When night came we repaired to the place appointed, with all things necessary for the escape of the lady and her companion. It was not long before they appeared. The portress, who attended our fair nun, joined her endeavours with mine, to prevail on the lovers to defer their caresses and raptures, till they could with more security give way to them. The warmth of the Italians is not easily repressed; however, we at last persuaded them to suspend theirs, and to make what haste they could to get out of the danger of being stopped, before the time that their flight would be known.

We travelled with the utmost speed, and, by the favour of the night, with safety. I had the care of the portress, who was sensible, and had a vivacity which even her course of life could not destroy; though she owned, it had been so long obscured, that, as natural as it seemed to her, she thought it had entirely left her. Her age was near forty; her person was good, and her face agreeable, although she had never been handsome. I found great entertainment in the conversation of one who had formed a world in her own imagination, not at all like to that into which she was going. When I attempted to rectify her mistakes, she seemed disappointed on finding the truth so different from her notions; but was glad I had informed her, and begged me to advise her how to conduct herself in a state so unlike that she had left. Her ingenuity and quickness of apprehension pleased me much. I considered she had embarked in a dependence, without well knowing the objections to which it was liable. I told her, that I would send her every

H

half

half year such a sum as should enable her to live with her friend and her husband on equal terms, or to leave them, if she chose it. She seemed greatly pleased, and very happy in my promises; but expressed great unwillingness to receive an obligation, to which she could never make any return. We had much time for discourse, the lovers being so much taken up with each other, that we had none of their conversation.

We did not abate our speed, till we got to the confines of Naples. I assisted at the ceremonials of marriage between the tender couple, and then left them to proceed on their determined course, as they were now free from danger.

I thought it would not have been safe for me to have returned to Rome. I went to Venice, where the carnival still subsisted, and made the place more lively. There was not a senator here, who did not lay aside his solemnity, to partake of the general diversions: the contrast between the silent formality of their grand council, and this time of mirth, was amusing. As for the women, they seemed more licentious in this city than in any other part of Italy. Here political motives got the better of the point of honour: even nuns are allowed great liberties, and their irregularities are winked at, lest too great constraint should deter them from entering into convents. The Venetians seem more concerned to get the expence of daughters off their hands, than to regulate their behaviour. The political institutions of this place would afford any one very agreeable matter of observation; but as they were not new to me, I left it, and travelled over the rest of Italy, Germany, Switzerland, and Spain, in hopes, by a variety of objects, to drive you, lovely Cornelia, out of my heart. I found some relief,

relief, but it was chiefly from despair, which did what absence could not have effected.

I attended the principal courts of Europe, and received great civilities at every one. The emperor offered me a considerable command in his army. Hoping that the rough trade of war might expel softer passions, I accepted of it, and had the good fortune to be successful, both in his cause and in that of christianity. I was commander of the troops that forced a very important place to surrender, which gave great pleasure to the prince I served. I received more from finding, that, by my endeavours, I had a little abated the brutality of my soldiers, and taught them, that mercy, generosity, and humanity, were not incompatible with true courage. I felt great satisfaction in restraining their immoralities, and in observing, that, notwithstanding the discipline under which I kept them, I gained their love.

When I thought myself sufficiently armed to bear your sight, I determined to return home, desirous not to lose the enjoyment of your friendship, when I was become capable of being contented with it. I was informed by Madame Miteau, that you were gone to Madame du Maine's. As my first desire was to see you, I was going there, when my journey was stopped by my so happily meeting you."

Cornelia expressed the great satisfaction which she received from his account of himself, and began to inquire about the place to which she intended to go. But he told her, it was already too late for her health; and as that subject might lead them into much discourse, he begged she would consider the necessity of some repose to her

fatigued spirits. Cornelia complied, and retired to her own chamber with Julia.

These ladies were no sooner alone, than Julia began to express her wonder, that any woman, whom Mr. De Rhone loved, could remain indifferent to him. Cornelia said, that her heart was too full of her love for Bernardo, to admit any one else. The other asked, if his ingratitude would not drive him out, and if Monsieur De Rhone's merit might not introduce him into the place. Cornelia replied, that though Bernardo no longer valued her heart, yet no other should have it: she could never alter; and if she could ever command her affections, she would never suffer any other man to have the power of making her so unhappy as she now was.

Julia had been so charmed with Mr. De Rhone, that she was not sorry to find her in these resolutions; though she did not perceive the true reason of her sentiments on this occasion; nor had Cornelia conceived any suspicion from her friend's extraordinary attention to that gentleman, till the haste Julia was in to see him in the morning raised her observation.

They met at breakfast very early, all glad to see each other. Mr. De Rhone began the conversation, by telling them, he was now ready to give them all the information he could as to the place about which they had inquired. He had informed them, that he had a house near it, with a garden and little park, at their service. Cornelia excused herself from accepting his offer; and it was at last settled, that she should take a most delightful little house, within a quarter of a mile of his, and not much farther from the convent where Lucinda was. He then insisted on accompanying them

them in their journey, and helping to fix them with the greater convenience, as he knew the place. After all things were agreed on, they set out together. The journey passed very agreeably to all, except Cornelia; tho' it was as much so to her, as the situation of her mind would permit.

The place Monsieur de Rhone carried them to was finely situated; its little domain was extremely pretty; the garden was on a bank, covered with a hanging wood, a river running at the bottom of it, with meadows of the finest verdure on the other side. They were so near Mr. De Rhone's park, that it was almost the same as their own. They got to this place about noon; the rest of the day was spent in viewing it, and putting their little habitation in order.

The next day they went to the convent, where the sight of them overjoyed Lucinda; and they were no less glad at finding her in good health. They told her who had been their conductor; and she gave them an account of the mortifications she had to suffer during her journey, from her mother's and sister's ill temper, and above all, from their scandalous reflections on Cornelia. The abbess hearing that some new inhabitants were come into the neighbourhood, and that they were then at her house, came to them, and entertained them in the most obliging manner. She was much taken with their appearance, and the melancholy observable in Cornelia made her hope, she had received such disappointments in the world as might disgust her of it, and induce her to take refuge in her convent. Whether it be from a belief that these places are the only sure road to salvation, or from a desire of having companions in their unnatural state, it is certain,

that all those who are shut up in religious houses, are indefatigable in their endeavours to draw in others. We shall charitably suppose the abbess was actuated by the first of these motives, when she expressed so great a desire, and repeated her solicitations of seeing her new guests so often. They begged leave to make frequent visits to Lucinda, which was immediately granted.

After having spent the morning there, Julia and Cornelia returned home. They found Mr. De Rhone had been employed in furnishing their little habitation, with every thing suitable and convenient, out of his own estate. He contrived to join ease and luxury, and preserve both without too much deviating from the rural simplicity of their cottage. He had removed the seats and other ornaments of a garden, out of his own into Cornelia's. The ladies scarce knew the places they had left so few minutes before. It was impossible not to be charmed with Mr. De Rhone's politeness and generosity; but it would have given Julia a much higher degree of satisfaction, could she have hoped that her pleasure had been his principal motive. But convinced that Cornelia was the only person he aimed at pleasing, his attentions filled her with fear, that his heart was less altered than he imagined. She found herself more interested in this, than she could have thought possible in the time; not considering, that the few days she had enjoyed his company had so confirmed the character which she had before admired from Cornelia's account, that love might easily be supposed to have made a very quick progress in her heart. She would have been greatly alarmed by the first symptoms of a passion she had always resolved against, and had never yet
given

given way to, if she had not depended on the little hopes she had of a return, for the keeping it within due bounds. She flattered herself, that what she felt arose only from the esteem and admiration his uncommon merit deserved.

Julia was naturally sincere, above dissimulation : her looks were so expressive and open, that an affecting thought no sooner came into her mind, than it made an alteration in her countenance. This soon instructed Cornelia in the state of her friend's heart. She saw with concern, that she had admitted a turbulent guest, and ventured her peace on what had robbed so many others of theirs. As soon as Mr. De Rhone left them to give orders to some of his workmen, Cornelia said to her friend, "I am not surprized, my Julia, at the impresson Mr. De Rhone has already made on your heart : there can be no indifference which he might not conquer. But reflect on my example. You know Bernardo's real and apparent virtues, you have frequently admired them, and yet you see even this man could fail. Let this deter you from fixing your affections too strongly on any man. Consider me with my dearest friends about me, an easy fortune, all rural beauties assembled round me, in every outward circumstance most fortunate, and yet by a fatal passion, in the midst of all those enjoyments, made to drag a miserable life. Every thing is robbed of its beauty by the melancholy complexion of my mind. The conversation of my friends, our present pleasure, can only give my heart some momentary relief. Painful reflections return the stronger for having been a little suspended ; and instead of thinking how happy I am made by all my blessings, I consider how

much I might be so, if another was added to them, and how little they can now contribute to my felicity."

Julia had never felt so strongly her own danger. "I am highly obliged," says she, "to my watchful and ever kind friend, for her cautions. Indeed I hope you mistake the sentiments that must follow the knowledge of Mr. De Rhone in every heart, for love. Was he to inspire me with that passion, it must destroy my happiness, as he would never return my affection: You could never be so effaced from any man's heart, as to leave room for any other object. After knowing your merit so well, who can ever hope for a share in his esteem! I shall always pass unregarded by him. The thought is painful, now that I feel only admiration for him; but it must make me unhappy if I loved him. I flatter myself that my knowledge of the hopelessness of such a passion will preserve me from it. But observe me, my Cornelia, with a watchful eye, and strengthen me by your wise counsels."

"How can you apply the word, wise, to me, when we are talking on this subject," replied Cornelia, "who am a strong example of weakness; fit to deter you by my misfortunes, but not to persuade you by my reasons, to resist all compliance with love's allurements. I have experienced the pains of it, but am not calm enough to gain the wisdom experience should give me. Let me alarm your fears if I cannot your reason, and let them preserve you from the dangers that threaten you. Fear is given to us, as to many species of the weaker animals, for our defence. Let us use it as such."

Here

Here Mr. De Rhone joined them, and interrupted Cornelia in the midst of her sentence. Julia was in so much confusion at his approach, that she was obliged to leave them. Mr. De Rhone asked Cornelia many questions about her. In answer to which, she related to him every thing concerning her, mixing with it the praises which Julia well deserved, and which Cornelia was determined to omit no occasion of repeating; in hopes, that she might raise such sentiments in his heart, as might secure Julia from the pains she had been warning her to avoid.

Mr. De Rhone was happy in seeing them so well pleased, with what he had done towards embellishing their little dwelling; and prevailed on them to visit his castle the next day. They were surprized with its magnificence, and charmed with the beauty of its situation. Mr. De Rhone contrived all the methods he could invent to amuse his fair neighbours. For tho' despair had once banished his love from Cornelia, and still preserved him from it, yet no one was ever more anxious for the happiness of a friend, than he was for hers. He had every sentiment for her that he knew she would admit of; and was so happy in her company, that he could not think of leaving this place.

As for Julia, Mr. De Rhone esteemed and respected her, but still it was in a degree so much below what he did Cornelia, that he had not even observed the symptoms of her love for him; which was but too strongly felt by herself, and suspected by all that saw her. These indeed were few. For as she equally loved solitude with her friend, they avoided, as much as they civilly could, seeing any one but Mr. De Rhone, and Lucinda.

Julia owned to Cornelia, the small benefit she had received from her prudent cautions, and that she was no longer able to defend her heart from Mr. De Rhone, tho' he gave her no encouragement to hope. She confessed a want of pride, in harbouring love and despair at the same time. But said, that tho' her happiness might depend on a return, yet her affection had a nobler foundation; it being fixed on his virtues and amiable qualifications, with a disinterestedness he deserved: that it was nourished by admiration, not by hope; and accompanied by humility, instead of being increased by vanity. She looked on the sentiments she had for him, as his due from every one that knew his merit; and could not like him the less, for his not having the sentiments for her she could not pretend to deserve. Mr. De Rhone shewed so much consideration and regard for her, that she was tolerably easy, as she had never flattered herself with the expectation of any thing more. She feared nothing but his absence; tho' without reason: he was too well pleased with his companions to think of leaving them.

Cornelia and Julia saw Lucinda almost every day; which with the civilities she received from the abbess and the whole sisterhood, made her time pass agreeably. But the abbess made their meetings less pleasant, by making herself too often one of the company. When she was absent, Bernardo was frequently the subject of their conversation. Lucinda could not bear to believe him so guilty as he appeared to be, and yet could not blame Cornelia for thinking him so. She had not learnt gravity enough in her new situation, to prevent her from laughing at her two love-sick friends. Her heart was free, and too gay to be easily

easily fixed, and she could not look on these matters in so sensible a light as the two sufferers. She had a little coquetry in her disposition, and could better comprehend how a woman should desire to be beloved and admired by every man, than how she should love one, who either never had loved, or had ceased to love her. They knew her friendship too well, to take the cheerfulness of her disposition amiss. It even served to amuse them; and seeing themselves ridiculed, would often bring them out of a fit of melancholy. They could not deny, but as she sometimes suffered by the effects love had on their spirits, she had a right to recompence herself by whatever mirth she could extract from it.

All methods were taken in the convent, to prevail on Lucinda to profess at the end of her year of probation; and these endeavours were strengthened by Madame De La Roche's orders. But no one was ever less inclined to lead the life of a recluse than Lucinda: she was determined to resist all that should be done for that purpose. With this resolution, and Cornelia's promise to get her from thence, if it should prove the only means of preserving her from being obliged to take the veil, she was pretty easy under her confinement. She considered, her youth would afford her many years of more lively pleasures, after the time of her imprisonment was past. Cornelia supplied her with books, which she contrived to read unknown to the rest of the society; and thus she continued the studies in which Cornelia had instructed her.

Mr. De Rhone never passed a day without enjoying some of the conversation of the two friends. They lived together almost with the

same ease as if one house had contained them. They often read together. At other times, he would assist them in cultivating their garden, and accompany them to the poor, whom they visited, and whose necessities they took a delight in relieving. Other neighbours took up little of their time. Reading employed what was not spent in the tribute of sighs and complaints to their love. Julia's were rather an indulgence of her passion, than a painful anguish; but Cornelia's were made in bitterness of soul, and accompanied with floods of tears; altho' she removed the melancholy subject from her thoughts as much as possible by books, which were great reliefs to her.

Cornelia had chosen the most sparing way of life she could. She allowed herself no superfluities; and but a part of what the world calls necessities, tho' she was plentifully provided with what was really so. By this regulation of her expences, she could the better afford to contribute to the ease of her indigent neighbours, and supply Bernardo with as good an income as that his mother had withdrawn from him: and this she did so secretly, that he could never guess from what hand it came. The poor had never experienced such goodness before, and were as much surprized as delighted with her generosity, and with that of Mr. De Rhone who imitated her.

There was nothing in which Cornelia was more solicitous, than to supply the poor with means of resisting the oppressions of the rich. She found out three young women, sisters, who were obliged to gain that support by their labour, which their father had amply provided for them. But unhappily, at his death, he left their fortunes and persons to the care of a very bad man, who
had

had defrauded them out of the whole ; and then had left the place, that he might enjoy the fruits of his villainy without the trouble of hearing their complaints, and the just censures of all the neighbourhood. Cornelia was touched with pity for these three young women, and supplied them with money, to obtain by law, what they had been so basely deprived of by their guardian. For this purpose, it was necessary to enable them to live at Paris ; and Mr. De Rhone recommended their cause to some of his friends, who gave them all possible assistance, and, at length, obtained complete justice for them.

In such actions as these Cornelia's time passed. She had nothing from without to intrude on her peace of mind. In every circumstance but one, fortune seemed to smile upon her ; and melancholy, by becoming habitual, grew less bitter. She had lived in this place about four months, and had, in some degree, acquired more ease of mind, when a message from Mr. De Rhone raised great fears in her, but much greater in Julia. He had been confined to his chamber for a few days with an indisposition, which his physician hoped would be soon removed. They had visited him constantly in his confinement every day, except the last, that Cornelia herself happened to be too ill to stir out. The message was to let them know, Mr. De Rhone was much worse, and begged to see them. They obeyed the summons with great haste and concern, and found him in a violent fever. His physician was then with him, who told them, he thought him in some danger, tho' not in a desperate way. The friendship of one, and the love of the other lady, was too tender, to hear of any danger threatening

threatening him, without great grief. They immediately resolved to lay aside all thoughts about unnecessary decorum, and to stay and attend him. They nursed him with great attention, which, as his senses were not affected, gave him much satisfaction. They scarce ever left his room both at a time, night or day.

But his distemper was too strong for their care. They could not prevent his growing so much worse in a few days, that his physician declared, he had little hope of his life. This was a dreadful sentence to both his nurses: but Julia was almost deprived of life by it. She could not bear to be an instant out of his room, and yet could not support his sight. She never ceased weeping, till a fit of stupefaction and slumber seized her, which gave Cornelia an opportunity of removing her to her bed.

Mr. De Rhone had observed these signs of uncommon grief, and tho' very weak, could not help saying to Cornelia, "I have seen too much of your goodness and friendship, to be surprized at the kind attendance you have given me, and the concern which appears in you thro' all your endeavours to conceal it. I always expected every thing that is virtuous and amiable from you. But how Julia, who has had so little reason to have any regard for me, comes to appear thus grieved, astonishes me. I own that tho' it obliges, yet it hurts me. The sorrow that others feel was always painful to me, and it is so to think I shall be the cause of it in them, even when I shall not be in a condition to perceive it."

"A man less amiable, but more vain than you are," answered Cornelia, "would have observed long ago the cause of what now excites you"

your wonder. She was always desirous you should continue ignorant of it, but now," continued she, bursting into tears, with the thought of what made that secrecy no longer needful, "it can be no harm to tell you, that you never felt more affection for any woman than she does for you. She had often heard me speak of you with more truth than your modesty would bear. She was charmed with your character from my description, and much more so after she became acquainted with you. I perceived love stealing into her heart from the first knowledge she had of you. She flattered herself she had no sentiments but those of esteem and admiration. But a little time convinced her, that these had given rise to a love, which proved irresistible, tho' she had used her utmost endeavours from the first to defend herself from it. It was a passion, towards which she had never before found the least tendency in her disposition. As her hopes had never been raised by your behaviour, or self-flattery, she contented herself with seeing you, and conversing with you constantly, and with a belief she might gain some share of your esteem. Notwithstanding her endeavours to conceal her affection, she is mistress of so little dissimulation, that it was extremely visible, and I have often wondered how you could avoid seeing it; and sometimes doubted, whether indifference for her did not make you choose to appear ignorant of a passion you could not return."

"I assure you, my dear Cornelia," replied Mr. De Rhone, "I was so far from being sensible of it, that I had not assigned this motive, even for her kind attention to me since my illness; and it grieves me to hear it now. I know
too

too well what hopeless love is, not to pity it extremely. I never deserved to excite so strong an affection, nor ever wished it but once. This might well make me slow in discovering it. I have lately been happy enough to make me wish to live; but what you tell me, adds to the fear of death, as it must give pain to one, whom I wish might feel none on my account. I should have chosen to have known Julia's sentiments, had I been likely to remain longer in this world. Gratitude, and the pleasure that must arise from being beloved, to one who has felt all the despair that indifference can inflict, might have given me the power of returning it. I esteemed Julia for what I had seen of her, and still more from what you had often said to me in her praise. I might have been still more sensible of her worth, had I not always seen her with you, who draw off my attention from every thing else. Since I can make her no return in the only way that love can be repaid, a reciprocal affection, let me however think of shewing my regard and gratitude in the only manner my present situation permits. I have left my estate to you, my first love, and ever dearest friend, charged with a legacy to Julia equal to what her brother has in his hands belonging to her; but now, if you consent to it, my fortune shall be divided between you. This I leave to you, whose honour I can with more confidence trust to, than to a thousand parchments."

This instance of Mr. De Rhone's friendship entirely overcame the little spirits Cornelia had remaining. She had never imagined he would shew his affection for her beyond the grave. But as soon as she recovered herself, she begged leave to bring Julia to him, that he himself might

might by friendly expressions, and the very great proof of regard he had shewn her, bring her out of a stupefaction of which she dreaded the effects. Cornelia added, that what he meant to do for Julia had some colour of reason, as the doing all he could for the future ease of a woman, who could not receive it without losing all her happiness by losing him, might be justified: but that his intentions for herself were unwarrantable. She did not merit so much consideration. He must have relations or friends who deserved it better. He had already conferred more obligations on her, than her gratitude and affection, great as they were, could repay. She begged him therefore to inform her, whom he would choose to have substituted in her place, as she did not know enough of his family and connexions to judge; and she would make it the same, as if he had bequeathed that part of his estate to them by will. She said, she would readily give up to them an inheritance which could never give her any thing but pain; since she could never make any use of it, without thinking of the misfortune that procured it her.

Here she was stopped by the excess of her grief. Mr. De Rhone was greatly affected by it, and told her, that if he had known any one more deserving than her, she should not have had any thing from him: that what he did was only paying a tribute which was due. And without giving her time to make any answer, he desired her, to bring Julia to his bed-side. He knew that her care for her friend would, however difficult the task might be, make her assume a command over herself. He was not mistaken, she rose up, and led Julia to him, who was scarce sensible of her
own

own motions. But the sight of Mr. De Rhone brought her in some degree to herself.

“Lovely Julia,” said he, “when I see my death can touch you, I perceive the value of life. Your friendship can give it new charms. But as it is a blessing I must now give up, I ought not to indulge the thought. I will rather beg you to accept what I have bequeathed you, as a token of my regard, if such dross as money can serve to express the best affections of our minds. Instead of desiring you to cherish my memory, I beg you to forget me; since I perceive the softness of your nature will make the remembrance painful. The only proof of affection I would have you shew me, is to cultivate your own ease of mind, to banish all melancholy thoughts; and to consider, that if I could behold you after I am beyond the verge of this world, I could not enjoy my own state unless I saw you happy, which will always be a point of consequence to me whilst I am living, and if any thing in this world can be so, must be the same after I am dead.”

Julia was so affected by what he said, that it overcame all her faculties entirely, and she fainted away. This sight moved Mr. De Rhone so much, that they were obliged to carry her out of the room. When she came to herself, she was almost distracted with the tumult of passions that arose in her mind. She was neither able to keep from him, nor fit to be near him. Love, gratitude, grief and terror, overcame her. In this situation she continued for two days. He seemed to grow worse gradually, and when his death was every moment expected, an eruption appeared, which increasing very much, abated his fever,

fever, and in a few days more he was unexpectedly out of danger.

Cornelia had not had either thought or opportunity to tell Julia, that the secrets of her heart were discovered to Mr. De Rhone. When he was recovering, Cornelia feared to let her know it, lest she should thereby give pain to her friend's modesty, and cause a confusion and reserve which might render her less pleasing to him, whom she wished to please. The joy these two ladies received from this happy change in Mr. De Rhone's health, was as excessive as their grief had been. When he was so far recovered as to have no other complaint than a remaining weakness, they left the house, and came only at such times as they thought would be most agreeable to him. These hours, indeed, made the greatest part of the day. For tho' he was extremely weak, he was able sometimes to converse, and always to listen to them, whether they read or talked; either of which they did, as they thought might best amuse him.

Mr. De Rhone had determined to use his utmost endeavours to return Julia's love; and took all possible pains to represent her to his mind in the most pleasing light. His thoughts dwelt on her merits, and whenever the superior charms of Cornelia intruded on his mind, and eclipsed her fair companion, he added the pleasure of being beloved to the lighter scale, and considered the satisfaction of having an opportunity of making happy a woman, who had placed her happiness in him. One indeed appeared blessed with all excellencies, but then she could never be his. The other, tho' less bright, yet was most worthy of his affection, since she had sensibility for
none

none but him. Here he might promise himself much happiness, and might be recompenced by love, for what he had once suffered from it.

These reflections, with Cornelia's endeavours, who saw, and assisted his views, as far as she was able, helped to make them in some measure successful. His esteem for Julia increased, and the satisfaction he found in knowing himself beloved, gave his friendship a softer turn than usual. Tho' he could not reason himself into an ardent and tender passion like what he had felt for Cornelia, yet he thought his heart so much touched that he might venture to declare his affection for her, without running the risk of thinking afterwards that he had engaged himself to more than he should choose to perform.

Thus resolved, Mr. De Rhone took the first opportunity of informing Julia, that if she had not the same concern for his happiness that she had shewn for his life, he should be reduced to wish himself sick to be an object of her tenderness; tho' it would not give him the same pleasure when it proceeded from general humanity, as if it arose from a more particular regard.

“Not, my fair Julia,” said he, “that I can have any right to hope for a heart, for which mine would be a poor price; but such as it is, it has for some time been yours, and can never be happy unless your generosity, not my merits, determines your return. This I can assure you in its behalf, that its first study shall be your happiness, and its guide, your will, in every point but that of its love for you, which cannot be controuled either by yourself or me. I can never wish for that power over it, unless you exercise yours cruelly, and yet even then I should despair of obtaining
my

my liberty. You might reasonably have as good grounds for disliking me, as I have for esteeming you; but I own I must with that in this point, your excellent reason may give way to you compassion. Let the pleasure of giving happiness plead my cause, and if my love can incline you in my favour, I may securely say, no man can have a more true affection for you, than that which now makes me beg your permission to hope."

If the pleasure and confusion Julia at once felt had not struck her dumb, probably he would sooner have received the consent, which he could not doubt of gaining. However, he waited no longer than till she had recovered the use of speech, to be assured she thought the sentiments he expressed, if they were real, did her the highest honour, and that he was the only man from whom she could ever wish them spoken in sincerity. Tho' her temper was frank and open, yet she was doubtful whether she had not said too much, and finished the few words she had uttered, with such a blush in her countenance, and amiable confusion in her manner, as greatly improved her charms. She appeared so troubled at the discovery of what she imagined he did not know, that it gave it all the beauty of novelty to him, and raised almost as great raptures in him, as if he had before despaired of success. He knew indeed that she loved him, but never saw it in so pleasing a light. He kissed her hand with extasy, and expressed his gratitude for her goodness in the strongest terms. Poor Julia's mind was in too great agitation for her to support the scene. She feared if she staid, she should confess her
love

love with more sincerity than might be pleasing to him, who must have been used to female arts and dissimulation. She therefore begged leave to retire, telling him, he had surprized her so much, that it was necessary she should compose herself a little before she could make him a tolerable companion.

Julia went directly to communicate this unexpected happiness to her friend, who was scarcely rejoiced at it than the other. It had long been her great wish; and tho' Mr. De Rhone had made no secret of his intentions to Cornelia, yet she observed a coolness in his affection, that made her fear it might never tempt him to marry Julia, as he seemed entirely contented with having her in his neighbourhood, and thereby enjoying her conversation and friendship. Julia begged Cornelia to accompany her to Mr. De Rhone, as she was too much confounded to listen to him again, so immediately, on the same topic. Cornelia, with pleasure, complied; and the two lovers, overjoyed by their late conversation, had an increase of vivacity that equalled what Cornelia had been inspired with, by hearing of her friend's good fortune. To make them more easy together for the future, she told Mr. De Rhone, that Julia had informed her of what had just passed between them, and that she had not imagined she was now capable of feeling so much joy as she had done on this occasion: that she saw two of the most deserving people in the world, and her dearest friends, going to make each other as blessed as mortality would permit. Dead to pleasure for herself, she was glad to find she could yet receive so much from the happiness of those she loved. She told them her thoughts were filled

filled with the delightful prospect that opened before them : mutual love and corresponding merit promised them a life of felicity, the continuation of which would be one of the greatest objects of her wishes.

Mr. de Rhone thanked her, and said that he joined his wishes to hers most fervently : since his happiness would be too great for him not to desire its continuance. Julia answered only with her eyes, which were full of gratitude, joy, and tenderness, and expressed more than tongue could utter. As this pair were so well agreed, and that nothing obstructed an immediate alliance, they soon determined upon a speedy marriage, and solemnized it without pomp.

Cornelia passed some days in the house of the new-wedded pair, and then returned to her own. She was not much more absent from them for this removal, as they spent much of their time together, and with Lucinda. Mr. De Rhone's love, instead of being lessened, was increased by matrimony. Julia was perfectly happy, and Cornelia preserved the same place in their esteem she had ever done. Time and the pleasure of seeing her friends enjoy such true felicity, by degrees brought her to be something easier in mind than she had hitherto been ; but she still preserved a fund of melancholy that was unconquerable. Poor Lucinda began to grow very impatient for her freedom. She was teized with continual solicitations to take the veil, and received reiterated commands from Madame De La Roche to that purpose. But she still postponed a compliance which she durst not absolutely refuse, tho' she was determined one way or other to avoid it.

Cornelia

Cornelia, always watchful for the good of others, and enjoying a little calm, introduced a manufacture into this village. She got from a neighbouring town a few understanding workmen, bought them all the materials that were necessary towards exercising their trade, and put as many of the young villagers as could be spared from agriculture, prentices to these manufacturers. By her encouragement, and that of her friend Mr. De Rhone, who was animated by her example, she had the pleasure of seeing her benevolent scheme flourish beyond her hopes, and of finding that the poverty of the people was already a little relieved by it. She took as much care of the minds of the poor as of their bodies, exhorting them to honesty, industry, and all other virtues in the sphere to which fortune had confined them, and trying to make them understand how much the exercise of them was conducive to their happiness. And lest precept and example should not be sufficient, she watched them carefully, reprehended such as were bad, and encouraged the good.

Cornelia was taken off from this worthy employment, by the pressing desire of Madame De Rhone, to have her company at Paris, where she was obliged to go in order to lie in. Tho' Cornelia was averse to leave her charming situation, which even winter had not robbed of all its beauties, yet she could not bear to be absent from her friend, at a time when her care and attendance might be of use and comfort both to her and Mr. De Rhone, who was full of anxiety for his beloved wife. This consideration determined Cornelia again to venture into the world. Lucinda, and the poor people in the neighbourhood were

were shocked to hear of her intended departure. The one she calmed by a promise of returning, as soon as Madame De Rhone was recovered; and made the others easy, by ordering all their usual supplies to be paid them by Lucinda.

Cornelia engaged her fellow-travellers to make a visit to Madame Du Maine in their way to Paris. The first salutations were scarce over, when that lady told her, there was a young woman in the house who came to inquire after her, declaring a great desire of seeing her. Cornelia immediately sent for this young woman, and was surprized to find Maria, who had so humanely and generously assisted her in her escape from Mr. De Rhée. Cornelia had sent her several sums of money, from time to time, as tokens of gratitude, and was now very glad to see her. She asked Maria, to what occasion this pleasure was owing? At this question Maria wept, and could not immediately make any answer. But as soon as she was able, she replied, "Madam, I am brought here by distress. I delivered you once out of a close and dangerous imprisonment: you may, perhaps, free me from a worse. The purity of your person was only in danger, but that of my soul is in the greatest that can be. Indeed it is gone, tho' I hope not irretrievably. You thought yourself obliged to me for the one; how much more should I be to you for the other! Cornelia told her, it would be very great pleasure to her, to be able to do her any service, and she should find her indefatigable in endeavouring it; she only begged to be informed how it might be done.

Maria began, after thanking her for the readiness she expressed, "When you, Madam,
I were

were at the Chateau de Rhée, I was one of the principal domestics of the family, being daughter to Mr. De Rhée's steward. My only business was that of taking care of my master's, and the family linen. I had been brought up with particular indulgence, had conversed much with Mr. De Rhée, and, I must own, conceived a particular liking for him, as soon as I was of age to be susceptible of love. He behaved to me with nothing more than the gallantry and freedom, that is usual with men to women much below them. I should not do myself justice if I did not tell you, that I took all the methods I could to cure this passion, and hid it so well from him, that I believe he never suspected it. By avoiding him as much as possible, and strengthening myself in the principles of virtue, I thought myself in some degree a conqueror, till you first told me your situation, and thereby convinced me I had only flattered myself into a belief of my indifference. I was sensibly touched to find that his extravagant passion for any woman had made him act so unjust a part. The desire jealousy gave me of removing you, corresponded with your persuasive prayers. I determined to do all you desired, fancying compassion was my only motive. I am, by this confession, taking off from the obligation you think you have to me: but I would not impose upon you. I need say nothing of my industry in providing for your escape. The event shewed how great my care and application had been. You were no sooner gone than I returned to my room, as you advised, and had got into bed, before Mr. De Rhée knew you were out of his power. When, as I guess, he had looked over all the gar-

dens

dens in vain, he alarmed the house. I got up with the rest, and counterfeited ignorance so well, that I was not once suspected.

Mr. De Rhée was under the greatest perplexity. He told his servants, he had met a young lady in his garden, who had escaped from her pursuers, and had begged admittance into his house: that he had left her only to seek for the keys, to let her in without disturbing his family; and that in the mean time she disappeared: that he supposed she had been alarmed by some noise, which had made her apprehend her pursuers had discovered her: that it grieved him to lose the power of giving assistance to a person in distress. He then desired them to search the garden, and all the adjacent places, it being impossible she should be far off. With how little success they obeyed his commands, you well know. I could not help being alarmed, lest any thing might have retarded your departure, and occasion your being overtaken. But the return of our people eased my fears. He had himself been employed in the search, and when he found all his endeavours fruitless, he grew quite frantic. He was convinced that some person must have been privy to your escape; and the suspicion fell on those who had been permitted to come near you. The man who went with you not being heard of, and no one knowing, why, nor where he was gone, confirmed these suspicions. In his rage, Mr. De Rhée turned off his Valet de Chambre, and chief female servant. Had I not been sensible of their baseness, I should have been much concerned to have had them suffer for any action of mine. But knowing them thoroughly, I could not help thinking it a piece of justice, that they should be

punished on your account, after having so scandalously assisted in injuring you.

After some time Mr. De Rhée began to grow more composed. He was detained by business at his castle, which he bore but impatiently. From this time I must date my misfortunes. Want of amusement, and a desire to expel you from his thoughts, made him grow particularly attentive to me. My vanity persuaded me it was the effect of my charms. Vanity had been the foundation of my liking to Mr. De Rhée. He took some notice of me, when I could first pretend to attract any man's attention. His superior rank made me think myself much honoured by it. I valued myself for having merit enough to produce this effect; and I loved him for having discernment to see it. Thro' my vanity he wounded my heart; and by this return and increase of attention his conquest was confirmed. The more I had been mortified by the little notice he had taken of me for some time, the more I now flattered myself. However I was determined never to offend against the restrictions of virtue. He received no more encouragement than what my eyes might, without my leave, give him. I durst not indeed quite discourage him, for fear of losing a conquest which I thought did me so much honour. I apprehended, that if I deprived him of hope, I should be deprived of my lover. And why, used I to say to myself, should I do what prudence forbids, and virtue does not command! How far may not his love carry him! Many men with strong passions have exalted women of a lower birth than myself. I indulged myself in many chimeras of this kind; and in pursuance of their
their

their dictates raised his hopes. At the same time I kept a strict guard on my own conduct. I gave him all possible opportunities of conversing with me, but in such places, and at such times, as I knew must secure me from any attempts.

Thus we went on for some time. But how little do they know human nature, who think they can say to passion, so far shalt thou go, and no farther! Who ever would be certain of never being totally conquered by it, must suppress it at the beginning, and never suffer themselves to go on to the confines of evil. Those who sit often on the brink of a precipice, are more fortunate than prudent, if they escape falling down it at one time or other. A person, who truly loves virtue, will always fly as far as possible, from every thing that is wrong. All the preludes to a bad action are thereby made bad, tho' in themselves they may appear innocent. You see, Madam, I am not insensible to the amiableness of just and good sentiments, since I can remember them so exactly. I collected them from some of your writings. I wish they had made half the impression on me, that they have done on you! But to continue my unhappy story. From small encouragements, Mr. De Rhée, almost imperceptibly, advanced to real liberties. His fondness seemed to increase. Intoxicated with vanity and love, I was off my guard. Instead of ballancing my passion with reason, the latter proved too weak to resist, and was expelled together with virtue. Whoever, alas! thinks that vanity will be our guard, mistakes its nature. A love of virtue and a consciousness of our dignity will preserve us. But vanity first

leads us into danger, and then renders us incapable of resistance.

Mr. De Rhée and I lived together for some time, without my being awakened from the lethargy, into which vanity had thrown me. He continued fond, and grew still more so. But my ease was first disturbed, by finding that the footing we had been upon could no longer be concealed. That which I did not blush at knowing of myself; I was ashamed others should perceive. I grew melancholy and fretful. This rather cooled Mr. De Rhée's fondness. I began to repent of what I had done; but more because I suffered from it in the public opinion, than because it was wrong; till by chance, in Mr. De Rhée's closet, I found some papers which I saw were written in your hand. This excited my curiosity. I begged leave to read them. He gave them to me very readily; and I retired immediately to peruse them.

These papers, Madam, shewed me to myself in my true colours. They were short treatises on vanity, pride, virtue, reputation, liberty, conscience, riches and happiness. From them I learned how much I had erred; and how far I had hitherto mistaken the road to happiness. My heart was touched. I saw I had been intoxicated with vanity and false pride, and how fatal their consequences are. I perceived that a fair reputation is of value to persons of all ranks, so far as it is founded on virtue; but that to be extolled for any thing else, is never worth our aim. That to be free, it was necessary to be good. That the vicious are the greatest slaves, and are ruled by the worst of tyrants. I felt that to be virtuous was the only way of saving us
from

from the pains that conscience can inflict ; and of securing to us the supreme satisfaction which we receive from its applause ; a pleasure far superior to all others. From whence I was easily led to believe in your maxim, that to be happy it was necessary to be good ; and that riches alone could never make us so ; that the pomps and follies they purchased, served only to increase the sources from whence most of our misfortunes spring.

Thus taught by you, madam, I was determined to renounce my past misconduct, and bring my sentiments to be worthy of such an instructor. I told Mr. De Rhée my resolution, though, I own, not without great difficulty. It is difficult to form the resolution of renouncing a person we have set our hearts on, and more so still to execute it. He laughed at my scruples, as he called them ; and tried to persuade me out of them : but his arguments were very poor, in comparison of the reason with which your little essays were filled. I told him, that if my love did not blind me to what was right, and fix me in the pursuit of what was wrong, nothing else could have that power over me ; and that I thanked God I could now so far conquer that passion, as to fly him. He seemed certain, that my sentiments proceeded only from the fear I might think I was now in, both for my reputation and life ; but that when the danger was over, passion would again assume its empire. I found my condition suspected, and saw that, by leaving the country, I should convince all my neighbours of the truth of the suspicion. I therefore determined to leave it at once for life. Mr. De Rhée gave me as much money as could be necessary for me, till I was recovered.

Nothing could persuade him, but that I should return to him as soon as I was well.

My father was the only person entirely ignorant of my shame. No one chose to tell him of it, nor could I confess it to him, whilst I was in the house with him. I begged his leave to visit a relation. As I looked very ill, and really was so, he hoped the change of air might do me good, and was therefore very well pleased with my seeming intention. As soon as I had left his house, I took the road to Paris. During my journey, I wrote to him, to let him know, that, till I was at a distance, I had not courage to tell him, how very unworthily I had behaved; that I hoped my repentance might, in some measure, alleviate my faults. I assured him, it was so sincere, that nothing could ever efface it from my mind, nor induce me again to offend; that instead of going to a relation, I was going to Paris, to be delivered of my shame, though not of my remorse; that I could never venture to return to him, as the neighbourhood of Mr. De Rhée, who had been my seducer, was not proper for a new professor of virtue. I begged his pardon in the humblest and strongest terms. I assured him, that my whole life should pass in the study and practice of virtue and contrition; and this, I hoped, might in time atone for my fault.

My father was at first much enraged; but he soon relented, and at length wrote to me. His answer was, that on my future behaviour depended his forgiveness; that he might pardon the first offence, but never would a second; that if he heard I acted up to my promises, he should act like a father; as he could never help thinking like
one,

one, and feeling either pain or pleasure, according as my actions were wrong or right. Some time afterwards, I was safely delivered of my melancholy burthen. The child, had it not put me in mind of my folly, was such as would have made any one happy. Mr. De Rhée, I know not by what means, discovered where I was, and wrote to me to take care of the child; and that he would supply me with all that was necessary for its support and my own. By other parts of his letter, I found he intended coming to me. I wrote to beg him not to attempt to see me, unless he was a sworn enemy to my peace. His answer in return to my most serious and earnest entreaties, was entirely ludicrous; and he persevered in his intention. This letter I received a few days ago, and was determined by it, to apply to you for your advice. Oh! finish the work you have begun, and instruct me how to avoid him, or let your precepts so strengthen my virtue, as to enable me to bear the sight of him with safety. But this, alas! would be so difficult a task, that I should be very imprudent in venturing it. As for money, I want it not from him. My own hands will supply me with a sufficient maintenance for me and my unhappy child. I want nothing but your advice and protection."

Cornelia felt a most sincere compassion for her; she pitied her staggering virtue, and wished to support it. She thought those happiest who never failed in their duty; but admired those who could return to it, and loved the repentant offender. She told Maria, that if she should think herself more secure with her, she would receive her and her little infant; and after her stay in Paris, which would be very short, carry her into the country,

where she should at least be out of the way of the temptation she feared. Maria was rejoiced with this offer, and expressed her gratitude in the most sincere manner. Cornelia, after having told her how very praise-worthy she esteemed her resolution, tried to compose her mind with respect to what was past, and advised her to contemplate the more happy future prospect which her good dispositions seemed to open to her.

Cornelia then returned to Madame Du Maine, who grieved at being so long deprived of her company. After a stay of two or three days, they went to Paris. Here Cornelia called to Madame Miteau, whom she found, with the rest of her family, in good health, and her trade very flourishing. Cornelia ventured abroad very seldom, and avoided appearing to Madame De Rhone's visitors, who were very numerous, both on her husband's account and her own; as those who had avoided her in her distress, had now the assurance to court her in her prosperity.

Cornelia had not been long at Paris, before Madame de Rhone was brought to bed of a son. As soon as she was recovered, Cornelia began to prepare for her return into the country. Madame De Rhone, however unwilling to part with her, would not presume so far on her friendship, as to press her to stay in a place that made her uneasy; both from a remaining fear of her uncle, and the still more tormenting thought of being near Bernardo, and yet bound by all the ties of prudence, and regard for her own peace of mind, not to see him. She had been informed by Madame Du Maine, that he had been with her, and had longed to know where Cornelia was; but that she, filled with indignation at his base inconstancy,
and

and not being well enough to give him an answer herself, had lent him word, that the lady he asked for, knew him too well to think he deserved any satisfaction in his inquiry; and therefore she, as her friend, must also refuse it him; that he had called several times afterwards, but had as constantly been denied admittance.

As Cornelia was sensible it would be more difficult for her to refuse than to avoid seeing him, she was much afraid of his finding her out, and wished herself safe again in her little asylum, from all the arts of the world and from her own weaknesses. She was apprehensive lest a return of affection in him might incline her to forgiveness, altho' she was fully satisfied, that she could never be happy with a man of a temper so unlike her own in steadiness and constancy. Full of these reflections, as she was one day coming out of Madam De Miteau's house, where she had been to take her leave, she felt somebody seize her arm, and heard the words, "Do I once again see you, my Cornelia! can you be false and ungrateful! can that form be so belied!" Turning her head with surprise, she beheld Bernardo, so overcome with the adventure, that he was scarcely able to support himself. "Dare Bernardo, says she, utter the words, false and ungrateful, which characterize his own actions so truly?" Bernardo was not able to pronounce a syllable, but caught fast hold of her gown, finding her disposed to leave him. "Perjured man, cried she, let me go. You triumphed over my indifference, but never shall over my reason and resolution!" She exerted more strength than usual, and easily got from him, as her words had given him so deep a wound to his heart, that before she had made three steps, he fell speechless

and motionless to the ground. Moved with this sight, though little more alive herself, Cornelia called Madame De Miteau's family to her assistance. They conveyed him into the house, where, using all means for his recovery, they brought him to shew some signs of life. After many deep sighs, he opened his eyes, and looking at Cornelia, said, with difficulty, "Cruel Cornelia, why do you wish the death of a man whose life depends on your love? Can unalterable love and constancy be so despised, by one who once approved them? You made me happy, to gain the power of making me more miserable. You have succeeded effectually, and will soon have the satisfaction of seeing me brought to the grave by my affliction. Nothing has hitherto kept me from ending a life made unhappy by your inconstancy, but the confidence in you, which I still in some degree retained, notwithstanding all that has passed. I sometimes was revived by a dawn of hope, from thinking how improbable it was, that she who is tender, benevolent, and generous to all others, should be cruel only to him who loves her more than life; whose thoughts and wishes are all centered in her; who would endure any extremities, rather than forsake her, for whom he could die with joy, if it would promote her happiness. But now, alas! these flattering hopes are vanished: I have seen your barbarity; but shall not see it long, unless providence be as merciless as you."

He uttered these words with such signs of grief and despair, that every one around him wept. Cornelia herself, though armed with the remembrance of her wrongs, was not able to support the sight. All she could find power to pronounce, was, "Unjust Bernardo, was it not enough to
have

have made me miserable for so long a time, but you must now charge me with faults to be found only in yourself. Had I been guilty, I might have been uneasy from the reproaches of my own conscience, but could never have lived that prey to melancholy I have been ever since we parted. You complain in feigned terms. Could grief and disappointment kill, I should not now be exposed to what my heart at this moment feels." Tears stopped her words.

Bernardo's looks expressed the astonishment of his mind. "What means, cried he, my Cornelia! Oh! let me still call you mine; you must always be so: I can exist no longer than while I am yours; in pity then, for one moment, suffer me to enjoy the dear delusion, to believe you still my promised, my constant love, tender and true as ever. Tell me, my dearest angel, tell me, why these reproaches, these tears, these charges of inconstancy, on him whose soul doats on you?"

"Your many gallantries, answered Cornelia, you might disown, as you may imagine I have no proofs of them; but is not your contract with Mademoiselle de Garré too notorious, for you to think of hiding it from me? Can your never writing to me but once after we parted, be justified? Are these reproaches injurious, or were your proceedings so? How weak must your constancy be, that was at an end in one short month! how precarious was my happiness, when placed on such short-lived love! how dearly have I paid for the felicity I did enjoy! how little do we know what is best for ourselves! I prevailed upon you to leave me: your love made you reluctantly comply. We parted with inexpressible grief, but with very different reason. How supportable would mine have

have been, had I known that absence was so soon to extinguish your love, and that I was never more to see happiness! How would it have relieved your concern to have known, that one month would restore your temper to its gaiety, and your heart to its freedom; that you would become a general lover to the sex, and be so taken up with your addresses to them, and your promises of marriage to one in particular, that you should never find a spare moment to write to me! Inconstant man! if I had no other merit to fix your affection, surely the sincerity, the tenderness of my love, might have deserved a longer remembrance."

"My dearest Cornelia, said Bernardo, you fill me with astonishment. I don't know myself by your account of me. So far was my mind from admitting gaiety, that I have never so much as felt ease since I left you. As for gallantries, I never practised them; and the contract you hint at, plainly appeared to the world an absolute deceit. What cleared me from the consequences, was my proving, beyond all possibility of doubt, that my name was obtained by fraud, and that the rest was added by the lady herself. I knew the justice of my cause, and therefore applied to no friends to solicit for me. She had engaged all hers in her behalf, and they were not remiss in exerting themselves. But yet truth prevailed, and this bad woman was sent down to her former habitation, with the contempt and infamy she deserved. The printed case will justify me in what I say. In the other charge you bring against me, that of not writing to you, I have not so strong evidence; but yet truth will in time appear, and you will know that I wrote frequently to you. I informed you of every thing that happened to me. I often asked

ed.

ed your advice, but received no answers. I still wrote on, being readier to imagine a thousand other reasons for your silence, than to suspect you of inconstancy. But this cruel suspicion came at last. I wrote to Lucinda, to as little purpose. In this perplexity, forbid to go to my mother's, I went to Madame du Maine; but she would not see me, and sent me messages that added to my distraction. My mind was on the rack, my constitution visibly decayed; I could not bear the shock of my being thus torn from every thought of happiness. In this situation was I till this moment, that I was brought out of it into one more grievous. Speak comfort to me, my Cornelia; save me from despair, save me from death. Let not those lovely eyes be drowned in incessant tears: Turn them kindly on me."

"What fate is reserved for me, cried Cornelia, with too much weakness to overcome my folly, and too much sense to be blind to it! Why, Bernardo, will you thus distract me! Why will you sooth my endless love with all your former softness! Can I believe what you have said! Can I hope there is so much happiness still in store for the wretched Cornelia, as to find your love true and constant! Do not flatter me, nor deceive me; leave me rather in the misery in which you found me. Time had alleviated it in some degree: if you can pity one whose misery you have occasioned, draw me not out of it, to plunge me in it afresh."

"Wrong me not, answered Bernardo, with such suspicions. I am incapable of change. My love has been for ever fixed from the first time I saw you. What has made me appear guilty in your eyes, is a mystery I cannot yet unravel. But,
my

my life, my only joy, promise me to listen to my defence, and that if it be convincing, you will again receive me with the sweetness that made me happy, and grant me that love which was my sole felicity. Let not a mistake rob me of a heart I could never with reason lose; since the whole study of my life would be to keep it, and to endeavour to deserve it.'

"Could I refuse you, if I wished it? said Cornelia; though circumstances have changed my affection has not. You have as full possession of my heart as ever, tho' my reason is not so much your friend, as it was in my happier days. I must ever wish to be convinced of the constancy on which my happiness depends. Grant, heaven, it may ever appear clearly to me, and all my ambition will be answered! The moment I find you what you were, you shall see me the same. I cannot conceal my being so still, though my pride would make me wish to do so, till I know that you have ever loved me. The hope you give me of proving it, brings more pleasure with it, than most people can feel with certainty." In pronouncing these words, she cast a look upon him so inexpressibly tender, as enchanted him. He took her hand, and kissing it with rapture, expressed his joy and gratitude, and assured her of his love in the most moving terms.

In this situation they remained, till Cornelia recollected, that Madame De Rhone might be anxious for her return. Bernardo begged he might accompany her; but she desired him only to follow her in an hour, that she might have time to compose herself. She told him, she should then be glad to hear what he could say in his defence; that he had the satisfaction of knowing that he had no judges

judges to plead before, but what were very partial in his favour ; and that if he meant to deceive them, their desire to believe him would do half the work for him. He replied, that he should apply to their justice, and not to their favour, when his love was to be tried ; though, in every other point, he must hope in their partiality for their approbation. He thought an hour's absence too much after so long a separation, and begged her to shorten the time, which she with pleasure consented to, as she was impatient to have her love, which she found as strong as ever, assented to by her reason.

When Cornelia got home, she went to Madame De Rhone's apartment, where her husband happened to be. They immediately saw something more than common in Cornelia's countenance, which, with her absence, raised their curiosity, and made them inquire if any thing had disturbed her. Cornelia, after saying she was afraid she should give them a very mean opinion of her sense and resolution, but that she could not conceal from them even her weaknesses, gave them an account of her being met by Bernardo, and how she was prevented from leaving him instantly ; of their conveying him into Madam Miteau's house ; of his recovering from his swoon, and what he said when he came to himself. She proceeded to give an account of all that had passed afterwards, as well as she could recollect, in the state of confusion her mind had been in, from the first moment of their meeting. She concluded by telling them, she expected he would come in a few minutes, and try to clear himself of all imputations.

Mr. and Madame De Rhone assured her, that she had made an apology for what needed none ;
and

and that it would have been want of justice, as well as of affection, to refuse Barnardo an opportunity of clearing himself. They had scarce time to express thus much before he appeared. After again giving the most affectionate marks of his joy on seeing Cornelia, he embraced Madame de Rhone, and congratulated her on her good fortune in being united to a man of such distinguished merit. Mr. De Rhone only waited till these friends had poured out the joy of their hearts on thus meeting together, to pay his respects to Barnardo. His very appearance was enough to clear him from the suspicion of any bad quality. The compliments he had paid Mr. De Rhone, in congratulating his lady, required his acknowledgments, which he expressed both with all possible politeness and regard.

As Barnardo's thoughts were full of his justification, he soon stopt all other conversation. He gave Cornelia a copy of his trial, and told her, that he believed this would be allowed a stronger defence, than any thing he could say with respect to the principal charge against him. He then begged, she would inform him of whatever else she had to object, that he might defend himself. Cornelia then repeated all that Henrietta had told her. Barnardo assured her, that all but the circumstance concerning Henrietta herself, was entirely false, and solely the invention of her infernal malice and jealousy; and that this circumstance was only in part true, and in reality so very different from the turn she had given it, that it shewed her envy and jealousy in an equally strong light with the rest of her behaviour. He then related every circumstance of the affair, and told them Henrietta's letter would prove the truth of what

what he said. He offered to go for this letter, if they were not already convinced; or bring it with him the next day, if they chose it.

This last proposal was agreed to. As for his behaviour since that time, Bernardo told them, that one who was happy in being Mr. De Rhone's friend, could give them an exact account of it, and convince them, that no man could, with less justice, be charged with a moment's indifference or inconstancy; and that if they would give him leave, he would introduce his constant companion to the friend he so greatly esteemed and longed to see; that all suspicions would hereby be cleared up, as no one would doubt the word of Mr. De Vaux. Mr. De Rhone was rejoiced to hear, that this gentleman was in Paris, and expressed a great impatience to see him. It was agreed, that Bernardo should bring him the next morning early.

It is easy to imagine the lovers parted with that happiness of mind, of which they had been so long deprived. If possible, their affection was increased by what they had suffered. They gave up their hearts more absolutely to joy; and the few hours they had to reflect on this happy change in their situations, made so great an alteration in their countenances, as well as their spirits, that the difference was very observable the next day, and did not escape Mr. and Madame De Rhone's notice. Nor did the amendment that appeared in Bernardo escape Mr. De Vaux. He and Bernardo came to Mr. De Rhone's next morning. De Vaux was introduced to Cornelia, whom he beheld with admiration; and turning to Bernardo, said, with a low voice, "I now cease to blame you. You loved an angel. It is no wonder, no mortal woman could remove her from your heart;
or

or divert your thoughts from so attracting an object."

Mr. De Rhone entering the room, saved her modesty from the continuation of a half whisper that had spread vermillion over her face. The meeting of the two friends was very affectionate; and their curiosity about all that had happened to each other, gave the delighted lovers an opportunity of giving some vent to the tenderness of their hearts, in the most affectionate endearments. Their conversation passed with the incoherence that must attend the raptures with which their souls were filled. They begged each other pardon, for letting any thing infuse a moment's doubt into them. Then each thanked the other, in expressions of the most lively gratitude, for the love that had remained unshaken in the midst of such storms of suspicion and despair. The recollection of the pains they had so long suffered, and the sense of their present felicity, equally forced the tears from their eyes.

Mr. De Rhone, fearing the agitation of Cornelia's mind might be too much for her strength, endeavoured to make the conversation general. He said, he would have apologized for his want of attention to Bernardo, had he not seen him so much happier in his fair companion, than any thing else could make him. Bernardo owned, he could receive no delight to be compared with Cornelia's conversation; but that if he could wish for any thing more, it would be for that of Mr. De Rhone, his lady, and his friend. "Indeed," said Madame de Rhone, "you would be very ungrateful, if you did not make me some acknowledgments, for having sat all this time in the most commendable silence, for fear of interrupting your conversation with

with Cornelia. I expected you should forget I was one of the company, and I withdrew to some distance, that I might not be an impertinent listener to discourses which did not want any third person."

"Julia, you know, is all goodness," said Mr. De Rhone; but you must not expect the same from me. Many things Bernardo mentioned last night were too concisely related to be understood by me. I shall therefore feel more uneasy curiosity than I dare own, if he will not satisfy it by a full and particular relation of every thing that has happened to him since he left Madame De La Roche's house. I know Cornelia will approve of what I propose, as it will make Bernardo the only speaker." All the company joined their requests to Mr. De Rhone's, and Bernardo immediately complied.

"When," said he, "I was prevailed on, for reasons you know, to leave the place where I was blessed with my Cornelia's company, my thoughts being filled with her image, I travelled on the whole day, without ever considering whether I was in the road that led to my uncle's, and without being sensible of the approach of night, which was pretty far advanced, when the coming on of a storm, and the clamours of my servant, who was out of patience at having so often spoken to me, without being able to make himself heard, roused me out of the reverie I was in. I found that we had lost our way, and were in a thick wood. We wandered about for some time. At last my servant discovered a house by the lights burning in it. We went to it, and begged for shelter till the storm was over.

We were admitted with great civility. An old lady came to us, and made me walk in with her
to

to the room where she had been sitting with two other ladies. They ordered every thing necessary for my refreshment, and behaved with great politeness to me. It was late, and I was soon led to a bedchamber. The next morning, being something out of order, the ladies insisted so much on my staying with them, that I could not refuse it. Indeed I found myself so much indisposed, that it would alone have been a sufficient reason for my compliance, had I not been more unwilling to give trouble to strangers, than to run the risk of being sick at an inn. Before the end of the day I grew very ill; and the next I was confined to my bed with a fever, where I was kept about a fortnight.

The attendance of Mademoiselle De Garré, on this occasion, was something beyond assiduous; it had an air of tenderness, which was also observable in her aunt. Madame De Garré was very obliging, and visited me several times in a day; giving strict orders that I should have every thing I wanted. Her sister was often busy in preparing things for me. She would scarce let me take any thing but from her hands. Had I complied with her care, I must have nourished my fever much longer; her great fear seeming to be, lest I should die for want of sustenance. Mademoiselle, who sat often by my bed-side, used to spend her time in pitying my disorder, and lamenting over me. Her attendance was most irksome to me: every thing she did was disagreeable. Her aunt, by her attentions, was sometimes useful, though oftener troublesome. Madame De Garré was the only one, whose behaviour I liked, though she was the least anxious to please me.

As my acquaintance with this family had very
extra-

extraordinary consequences, I must describe those who composed it. Madam De Garré was very near her grand climacteric, if not beyond it; was polite in her manner, and agreeable in her conversation. She doated on her only daughter, and saw nothing but with her eyes. She had not spirit enough to govern, and was besides too indolent to examine whether she was ill or well governed.

Madame De Garré's sister was between forty and fifty. She had never been married, which, in all appearance, was not occasioned by any aversion to the state. She omitted no method of appearing young. But I ought first to give you some idea of her person. She was tall and thin; rather stiff in her manner and shape. Her hair was of a bad brown, her complexion dark, and without the assistance of art, would have been entirely void of the rose, or of any other red. Her cheeks fell in a little, and her eyes were somewhat sunk, but still retained a languishing air, which was rather a true representation of the state of her mind, than any improvement of her beauty. Her throat and hands were so lean, and the veins and sinews appeared so plainly, that they might have been very useful to those who study anatomy; but, to others, were far from agreeable objects. The chief foundation of her vanity was a small foot, which had been pinched for many years, that it might be kept at what she thought a beautiful size. In her conversation she affected a youthfulness, that put one more in mind of the distance she was removed from it. She had an air of tenderness, mixed with all the flirtishness of coquetry. She pretended to much good nature and compassion, but continually hinted how much the men thought her deficient

deficient in these virtues; though, in truth, they seemed so deeply rivetted in her nature, where our sex was concerned, that one could not suspect her of ever having been void of them. The chief topicks of her conversation, were the failings of girls, and the superior perfections of women arrived at an age of maturity. However, she approved of, and wore the dress of girls, tho' she suffered by its coldness.

Mademoiselle was about thirty; she was generally esteemed a fine woman, but I never could see her in any better light than that of a large woman. She had some spirit in her eyes, which, with a fine complexion, constituted all her beauty. This was not improved by the colour of her hair, which was of a fiery red; but her eye-lashes and her eye-brows were black. Her teeth were fine, but her nose was very large. No woman ever had a person less fit to act the tender, yet it was what she failed not to affect. She was insignificant and tiresome in her conversation, and so very obliging that she could never oblige. Her civility seemed a force put upon her by art, and in most cases was so; for she had a very violent temper, never accustomed to controul, nor subjected to any constraint. Her aunt and she had frequent quarrels, which indeed seldom went beyond hints of the inconsistency of gallantry and coquetry with age, on one side; and of the impropriety of forwardness, and courting of men, on the other. Before the application became plain, Madame De Garré acted the peace-maker, and used, with the utmost difficulty, to reconcile them. They never clashed on any subject, so much as about me. Each was offended at the other's care, and was continually hinting at the indecent regard the
other

other shewed. Had they been women, whose attention could have flattered me, I might have become vain; but their civility seemed to me rather to proceed from affection to our sex in general, than to me in particular.

Under the care of this family I recovered in about a fortnight; so as to be able to write to my Cornelia: but much more time was required to recruit my strength sufficiently to enable me to take a journey. During this interval, I was exposed to all the artillery of the eyes of the two maiden ladies, which was always levelled at me, and played off with great skill. Their conversation was not less kind. It was not indeed quite free from a little acrimony. For with the sweetest expressions to myself, were mixed the severest reflexions on each other; particularly, when either of them was absent. As their aim was to depreciate each other in my opinion, I was soon made acquainted with their faults and follies. I was told of the fondness they had shewn several men, lest gratitude should tempt me to return what they so lavishly bestowed on me.

From the aunt I learned, that Mademoiselle was at fourteen going to run away with her father's Valet de Chambre; but that by her aunt's great penetration the affair had been discovered, and was thereby prevented; and that her niece's pride had been hereupon cultivated with such care, that she had never taken so low an inclination since. That afterwards a marriage was concluded between her and a young gentleman of the same province; and that after her cloaths had been bought, and every thing got ready on both sides, the lover chose another bride, and married privately a young woman with whom he had been

long in love. That the endeavours Mademoiselle used to make his father irreconcilable to him, had shewn her in such a light to him, who had before been so desirous of having her for his daughter, that he grew thankful for his son's deliverance, and in his joy was sincerely reconciled to him and the wife he had chosen, who was of a very different character. The unhappiness the old gentleman found he was so near bringing upon his son by choosing for him, had so strong an effect on his good nature, that tho' he had before appeared very absolute in that point, yet he never after would constrain the inclination of any of his children, in their marriages; but, if their choices were no way shameful, approved of them. That Mademoiselle had since tried to attract many others, but without success.

From the niece I learned, that her aunt had been still more unfortunate. That she had lived in a convent, where she was put for education, and kept there till she was near thirty, by a mother who was not fond of having her daughters appear with her. That her mother dying, she left the convent, and appeared in the world with a fortune sufficient to support her with dignity. "The splendor of it," said Mademoiselle, "attracted a young man in desperate circumstances, tho' of good birth. He pretended a most ardent passion for her, and her vanity carried on the deceit so well, that he might have spared himself half his trouble. Her nature being too tender to shew cruelty to so true a lover, she promised to reward his flame. Too generous to expect any fortune with him, she settled what was sufficient on him, and prepared all things necessary for the celebration of their nuptials. The gay appearance she intended to
make

make afterwards, and the excess of her joy made her the more lavish in her preparations, which were indeed very splendid. She had hastened them, to satisfy both her own and her lover's impatience: certain, by a melancholy observable in him for some days, that his was so great as to be quite painful to him, tho' out of his most obsequious submissiveness, and his great delicacy, he had not declared it. Thus hastened on, the morning came, when Love was expected to bring the hymeneal torch to guide the love-sick pair to their happiness. The bride was dressed early, and expected the bridegroom with all the beauty of an Adonis, and raptures equal to her own, to lead her to the church. When behold! a letter came, which, had it been written by any other hand than his, must have waited for perusal till a more leisure hour. But, alarmed with receiving this poor lifeless epistle, instead of an ardent lover, tremblingly she unfolded it, and read these words."

' Madam,

' **C**ould any thing obtain your pardon for
' my proceeding with you, it would be the
' grief with which I reflect upon it. I have too
' long acted the part of a hypocrite with you.
' Therefore as much as I ought to blush at this
' discovery of myself, I will not add to my former
' deceits, by framing false reasons in my
' excuse, but will, with the contrition of a repenting
' criminal, tell you the whole truth.
' My fortune, you know, is so involved in debt,
' partly of my father's, and partly of my own
' contracting, that it is only an incumbrance to
' me. Yours offered me a prospect of obtaining
K 2 the

the ease and affluence mine could not give me. This induced me to address you, and you were generously pleased to accept of me and my shattered fortune. As the time when we were to be united drew near (pardon the truth) I found my dislike to you so very strong, that no fortune could recompence me for passing my life with you. Had only my own happiness weighed with me, I should have broken off the match directly; but I owed you gratitude, and honour called upon me to fulfil my engagements. I determined to punish myself for the mercenary view that had at first led me into them, and behave so well to you that you should have no cause of discontent, tho' at the expence of my own happiness. I continued to act in consequence to this resolution, with grief of heart not to be described. But last night the caresses that passed between us at parting, which proceeded from true affection on your side, and which I endeavoured to return as proper in our situation, convinced me, that by marrying you, I might indeed keep up the appearance of honour, but must in reality swerve from it most essentially. For I found my disgust so strong, that it would be impossible for me to behave with the love you had reason to expect, and which gratitude demanded. With this thought I have been tormented all night. I have not been in bed since we parted, and have but now been able to determine with myself, that it would be more just to inform you with my sentiments, than to leave you to make the discovery by suffering from my future unavoidable neglect. I will add one word of advice, which is, that you
would

' would hereafter be cautious of thinking you
 ' are beloved, whilst you have a fortune that
 ' may tempt a man to pretend a passion for you:
 ' very few will feel the repentance I do. If any
 ' thing can plead in my favour, let it be that the
 ' distress in which I have chosen to continue,
 ' rather than to make you an unhappy wife, is
 ' so great, that if I cannot find some speedy re-
 ' lief, of which I have little hopes, I must end
 ' a life I have not the means of supporting.'

" Judge, " continued Mademoiselle, " how
 this must affect a woman whose imagination was
 full of fancied scenes of happiness, and whose
 vanity equalled her love of matrimony. She
 tried to give this affair a thousand different turns;
 but the truth was soon whispered abroad, and in
 a very little more time grew quite public. A-
 shamed of being a general jest, she retired with
 my mother to this place, where she lived two
 years, railing at mankind, and vowing eternal
 hatred to the sex. But no vows are less sincere
 than those made in anger. As hers abated with
 the desire of having her disappointment made up
 for by some truer lover, the vow was forgot;
 and she once more appeared in Paris. The slight
 she had received was refreshed in people's me-
 mories by her appearance; and she was for se-
 veral years so much the object of ridicule, that
 no man had the assurance to share it by address-
 ing her. However, at last, one by necessity
 made courageous enough to venture the laugh of
 the world, and the caresses that had so entirely
 disgusted a former lover, began by his courtship to
 make her some amends for the indifference every
 one else had shewed towards her. His conscience

was less squeamish than his predecessor's. He counterfeited better, and soon convinced her of the violence of his passion. Other people were not so easily imposed on. My brothers and I used to laugh at her credulity, and ask her, how she could so easily believe a man's professions, after having been so notoriously deceived. This question often repeated, with hints to the same purpose, at last so piqued her, that she told us, she would convince us of the truth of her present lover's passion. The way she took to prove it was by telling him with great appearance of grief, that by misfortunes she related, she had just had an account that her fortune was reduced to less than a quarter of what it had been, but that she was enabled to support this affliction by considering, that she had still enough to afford them a tolerable subsistence, provided they retired into one of the cheapest provinces in the kingdom. This declaration was more terrifying than a clap of thunder to her lover. Tho' to procure himself a gay life, he would have encumbered himself with her, yet he was not so near starving as to accept of a retirement with such a companion. Accordingly he desired time to consider of what she told him; and the next day let her know, that he had an aversion to the country, and as her fortune was reduced, would not be so ungenerous as to clog her with a husband, who could contribute very little to the joint expence. This second disappointment touched her even more than the first, as she was many years older, and therefore in a more desperate situation as to the prospect of marriage, and as it gave us an opportunity of triumphing in our discernment. But all that is passed has not given
her

her an implacable hatred to your sex. She still tries to attract, and is as capable of being strongly attracted as ever, which you have had reason to know, by the untimely love she has taken for you."

Thus I was informed of the true characters of both these ladies, which you may imagine did not greatly endear them to me; tho' I was much indebted to them for the very great care they had taken of me in my sickness. As soon as I began to speak of going away, which my health I thought would soon permit, they all told me how much they should be mortified, on finding that nothing could keep me but the want of strength to leave them. This they represented so strongly, and made me so sensible of the incivility of such a proceeding, that notwithstanding they were very disagreeable to me, I determined to get the better of my reluctance, and stay with them a few days after I was recovered.

One day Mademoiselle desired me to mend a pen. When it was done, she would make me try if it would write well, and insisted on my writing my own name for that purpose, as the words she could look at with most pleasure. When I had written what she desired, she kissed the paper several times, and then put it in her pocket, saying, whatever had my name on it was too dear to be parted with by her. Perhaps you will think these gallantries a little extraordinary in a woman; but she entertained me with such continually. When I had staid as long as I thought my complaisance and gratitude obliged me to, I ordered my servant to prepare for my departure the next day. This having reached Mademoiselle's ears, she came into my room,

and begged of me to stay, in terms more pressing and passionate than most lovers of our sex could have used to a distress. I professed myself obstinate in the point, but promised to wait on them very soon again. In short, I thought of nothing more than contriving to get out of the house, which she pretty well guessed, and grew as fierce in her rage as she had been in her love.

Before I was freed from her persecutions, her aunt came to signify her concern for my intention of leaving them. She sighed, dropt a tear or two, languished, and played off all those softer arts that may succeed with a blooming virgin, but so ill agree with wrinkles and old age. She couched so many tender lamentations on my approaching absence, under the name of somebody, being too bashful to name herself, that she perplexed me more than her niece had done. Whilst I was in the midst of this scene, a letter was brought me, which I fancied came from my Cornelia. Impatient to inform her of my coming, as well as to see her, I dispatched a note to her, and set out myself as soon as my horse could be got ready. I was at the inn soon after the messenger who had brought me the letter was returned. But who can express my surprise on seeing Henrietta instead of lovely Cornelia!"

He then shewed the letter Henrietta had sent him; repeated his answer, and all that passed between them when they met. "I returned," continued he, "overcome with my disappointment. As soon as I got into the house, I went into my own apartment, and locking myself in, wrote an account to Cornelia of all that had passed, as I had done before by every post; and never till this morning discovered, that the bribery
of

of this enraged lady had corrupted my servant, who had, at her desire, stopped all the letters that came from Cornelia to me, and all that I wrote to her. I mention this circumstance particularly; because all that I have suffered, and how much that has been, you, my friend," turning to Devaux, "can form some notion, has arisen from her receiving none of my letters, after the first.

The day before that I had fixed for my departure, Madam de Garré desired some private conversation with me, which, as hers was least irksome, I was glad of. But great was my astonishment, when she began to represent to me, how inhuman and dishonourable it was for a man to break his word with a woman, after having gained her affections, and that no word was so strong as a contract. I could not guess at the meaning of her harangue, till on desiring her to explain herself, she told me, in a multitude of words, that I had made but a bad return to the friendship they had shewn me, by my refusal to marry her daughter, after the promise of marriage I had given her. I affirmed, I had never thought of her daughter in a way that could tempt me to give her any such promise: that I had been far from ever having said a word to her that tended towards love. Upon this, she drew out of her pocket the very piece of paper I had tried the pen upon for Mademoiselle. I found that over my name was written a contract in the strongest terms. The sight of this alarmed me, as I saw it must create me a great deal of trouble. At the same time, provoked with the villainy of the design, I exclaimed very violently against such treachery, and protested, that if it cost me my life, it should at least never have the conse-

quence intended, for that I must ever detest the woman who could commit so scandalous an action. I shall not repeat all that passed between the mother, the daughter, and myself; nor the offers the aunt made me of any assistance she could give me in this affair. Her envy and hatred of her niece made her readily believe me; and she hoped to ingratiate herself with me by taking my part.

I left this family in a rage, and went to my uncle's; where I had not been many days, before I was called to Paris, on account of the process Mademoiselle De Garré had begun against me. I will not trouble you with an account of the trial, as I have given it you printed at large. By it you will find, that the confession of her own servant, who had writ the contract for her, and had been trusted by her with the manner in which she had induced me to sign my name; her confession, I say, you will see cleared me, and produced a decree in my favour. My adversary would have been punished for the fraud, had not her friends had credit enough to get the penalty remitted, and she returned back without any farther pain than shame and disappointment.

As for myself, I had not suffered near so much by all the trouble of this vexatious suit, as by not hearing from my Cornelia. It is impossible to describe what I felt; those only that have loved can guess at the situation of my mind. During the course of this cause, I had a letter from my mother, full of rage for my imprudence, as she believed I had really given the contract, and declaring she would have no farther concern about me. This was a very perplexing circumstance;

circumstance; for I found her intention was to withdraw my allowance. Whilst I was thinking on the method I could take to subsist, I had a sum sent me from an unknown hand, accompanied with an assurance of receiving the same every half year. It was so considerable, that my income was increased rather than diminished by my mother's inhumanity. I made all possible inquiries, but I could never get the least intelligence of my benefactor."

Bernardo was in so weak a state of health and spirits, that he could not talk so long, without being apparently affected by it. Devaux, who was apprehensive his friend would not be able to perform the task he was engaged in, observed it first, and desired him to have a little more regard to his own ease; offering at the same time to supply his place, and continue the narration, for which he was very well qualified, having been Bernardo's inseparable companion during his stay at Paris. This proposal was very readily agreed to, and Devaux continued thus.

"Bernardo was now delivered from all the trouble the unaccountable love of Mademoiselle De Garré had given him. His banishment from his mother's house was no misfortune, as he learned at last that Cornelia was gone from thence: he felt no want of money; and friends he is sure to find in every place, where he is known. Thus his situation would have been easy, had he not been a lover. Every day served only to increase his melancholy. He avoided all company, and scarce ever stirred abroad but to take some solitary walk. I had great reason to believe he found so much more satisfaction in the indulgence of his despair, than in my conversation, that he would

have been glad I had been more sparing of it; but I was really too much concerned for his welfare, to consider any thing but what I thought best for him. I was sure his own melancholy imagination was his greatest enemy, and therefore I was glad of any opportunity to interrupt his giving it full scope.

I hope I shall easily be forgiven, if I dwell on some circumstances of his history which will not be disagreeable to the company, altho' foreign to the principal design of his account of himself, which was only to clear himself from the imputation of inconstancy. I went one evening to his house, according to my usual custom, and was told, he was gone out to walk. I determined to wait his coming home, but began to grow uneasy at his staying out much longer than usual. After inquiring which way he had taken, I went after him. Passing thro' a little street, I perceived a crowd of people. When I approached them, curiosity made me examine into the cause of their being assembled. I found that there was some scene of distress in the house before which they were gathered, tho' none of them could give me a distinct account of it. I endeavoured to get in, but was prevented by the crowd. I soon after distinguished Bernardo's voice amidst the cries and lamentations of women and children, and the threats of men who filled the entry. Moved by my apprehensions for my friend, I exerted all my strength to get to him, but could make no great progress, till he had contented those clamorous men, whom I found to be bailiffs.

I then accompanied Bernardo up stairs, into a room in which were five children almost
frighted

frighted out of their senses. At the upper end of the room was a young girl of about fifteen, who appeared in the deepest affliction. She was recovering out of a fit, when we came in; and, before she was able to speak, I had leisure to observe that nature had been her friend, however fortune might persecute her. She soon got strength enough to make her acknowledgments to Bernardo, who, not content with the services he had done her, begged to be informed of the state of her affairs, that he might assist her farther. Many tears forced their way, before she was able to comply with his request; but as soon as she was capable of entering into the melancholy detail, she began to this effect.

“ Tho’ I am now an inhabitant of France, I am a native of Spain. My father was a younger brother of a good, tho’ not very considerable, family. My mother was born of one of the greatest families in that kingdom. They conceived a mutual passion for each other; but as her rank, beauty, and fortune, might have entitled her to one of the best matches in Spain, many of which had been offered, tho’ she was then but extremely young, there was but little hope of obtaining the consent of her friends to her marriage with a man who had nothing but merit to recommend him. As soon as their affection was suspected, all the means that the jealous ingenuity of a Spanish brother and uncle could invent, were used to prevent any correspondence between the lovers. But love, more ingenious still, baffled these designs; and my father contrived to convey such powerful persuasions to my mother, that she promised to make her escape from her goalers, and fly to him. It being not much more difficult to get away from
them,

them, than to inform him of her intention, she soon followed her letter, and they were married. They flattered themselves, that, after their marriage, her friends would acquiesce in what they could not prevent, and not turn an act of imprudence into a misfortune, by distressing them with the effects of their anger. But herein they soon found themselves mistaken. My mother received an absolute refusal of her request to be paid her fortune; and time instead of abating, strengthened the rage of her relations so much, that my father and she soon found that Spain was no safe place for them. The youth of both might have pleaded a little in their excuse. My father was but twenty-two, and my mother younger by five years. Had her relations been barely just, my parents might have lived in ease and honour. Their characters and behaviour gained them esteem. Pomp and splendour they could not attain to, nor ever, I believe, did they once form a wish about them. Her family, from the cruel resentments of a pretended justice, found means to reduce them to as great difficulties as two people could be in, who wished for nothing beyond a necessary subsistence, and each other's company. However, they were for some time unacquainted with distress, notwithstanding all the efforts of their enemies; the pleasures of an uninterrupted conversation and indissoluble union being too great not to engage their thoughts entirely, and to keep them from anticipating fears and melancholy reflections. But at length they found the necessity of leaving Spain, and their choice was soon determined to France.

When they first came into this kingdom, they were almost destitute of every thing; but, instead
of

of giving way to grief and despair, they turned their thoughts to the contrivance of means to gain a subsistence. They succeeded so well, that, by their joint endeavours, they were enabled to supply themselves with necessaries, which was all they aimed at: for when their labours were ended, they were sure of greater satisfactions than money could purchase, in the conversation of each other. My father provided for his family by writing; and my mother, by different kinds of needle-work. Thus, by their industry, they supported a life, which the tenderest affections, and best of tempers, made delightful to them.

One day as my mother was waiting for a lady, for whom she had finished some work, the lady's husband came into the room. He was a man of too much gallantry, not to be struck with the sight of so beautiful a woman, and not to inform her of the impression her charms had made upon him. He sat down by her, and, after inquiring into her situation and circumstances, began to lament that such irresistible charms should not be placed in a rank more suitable to their lustre. He assured her, that if she gave him leave, he would, with inexpressible pleasure, enable her to live in a manner more equal to her merits; and offered her, as a proof of the truth of his professions, a purse with a sum in it, which to her must have been very considerable, tho' not tempting, as she suspected the intentions of the giver. To put an end to his hopes of success, she told him, that, in the most tender reciprocal affection between her and the most amiable of husbands, she enjoyed perfect happiness. Had they not valued each other beyond all that wealth could bestow, they would not have been reduced to the way of life they were now
in ;

in; and she could venture to say, that time had much increased the affection that was before strong enough to make them neglect every other consideration. After saying this, she would have retired, adding, she would call another time, for she fancied his lady would not return so soon as her servant expected. But he insisted on her sitting down again, and took such fast hold of her hand, as deprived her of the power of executing her intention, without much bustle. He then began to make the most ardent professions of the passion with which she had inspired him, and offered her preferment for her husband, and assistance for both, if she would but permit him to visit her. He ran into a long detail of all the pleasures that money can buy, and the ease that must arise from plentiful circumstances; assuring her, that the decay of love would always follow poverty, and that increase of family might make a subsistence, which was now with difficulty obtained, become insufficient. My mother, enraged at his infamous proposal, told him, that poverty had never appeared terrible to her, till now that it had exposed her to hear such detestable discourse; that he had greatly mistaken her, if he believed she would exchange poverty and innocence for riches and guilt; that the only poverty she feared, was that of the mind; she saw it in him, and he had made her esteem herself rich, by shewing himself so much her inferior in that respect. The scorn and anger of her countenance was too striking not to affect him. He let go her hand, and she immediately left the room; and meeting the lady's woman, told her, that she should be greatly obliged to her, if she would let her know her lady's commands, without her being obliged to come

come into that house again. The emotion with which she uttered these words, and the haste she made to get away, together with the character his lordship bore, made it easy to guess her reasons, and to comply with her desire.

My mother had not been at home long, when the lady entered her room. She came up to, embraced my mother, and told her, that she had been in the next chamber during the conversation between her and her husband; that finding they were together when she came home, jealousy (for which his various amours had given her too much reason) had tempted her to listen to their discourse; that she had been charmed with her sentiments and behaviour; and if her friendship and interest had any weight, she would shew her, that virtue is not always attended by adversity; and the more effectually to assist her, she intended to return that evening to meet with my mother and her husband, and consult on the means of providing for them. She then offered my mother her purse, and insisted much on her accepting of it. But she having been used to be supplied by her own hands, begged to be excused taking what no present necessity required. My mother added, that what she had done was for her own sake, and therefore the lady was under no obligation to her; but thought herself extremely obliged to her ladyship for her generous intentions, and assured her of the joy she should receive from seeing her at the time she had appointed.

The result of the meeting was as successful as the lady's assurances had been promising. She obtained a commission in the army for my father; and not letting her generosity stop here, she got him promoted a little before her death, by adding
her

her interest to the reputation his courage and conduct had gained him. This success brought plenty into our family; but my mother never could forbear lamenting it as a misfortune, since it exposed my father to great dangers. No advantage of circumstances could make her amends for the loss of his company; and much less, for the fears she so often laboured under. She was, for some years, punished with this prosperity, till a war broke out between France and Spain. He was then offered a considerable command; but tho' he had love enough for honour to be called ambitious, he could not be led by it to do any thing he thought wrong. As such, he looked upon an engagement to fight against his country. He was therefore reduced to give up a profession he was as fond of, as he could be of any thing that carried him away from his family. But he thought it not consistent with his honour, or integrity, to retain a post, the duties of which he could not fulfil. His majesty however was graciously pleased to say, he would not lose him entirely, though he no longer remained in his army, but would give him a place about his person.

This post afforded them a tolerable subsistence; and the happiness of our little family was very complete, till my mother was seized with a violent fever, in which her life was soon despaired of. My father's grief was inexpressible. However, nature proved too strong for the distemper. After having lain for some days in so weak a condition, that we feared every moment would be her last, she shewed signs of amendment, and in a short time, was judged to be out of danger. Joy now took the place of grief in our hearts. But, alas! how short sighted are we! the unhappy period, that brought

brought on all our misfortunes, was near. My father had suffered much during my mother's illness; he had passed three weeks in the most extreme anxiety and despair, without stirring from her bed-side. The agitation of his mind, and perhaps some infection from the distemper, threw him into a fever likewise. The symptoms appeared mortal from the first. In a few days he died, after having taken leave of us all in the most affecting manner, and given us the best advice for our future conduct, and endeavoured to strengthen our minds in the love of virtue. When he attempted to bid my mother adieu, the sight of her grief, the thought of parting with her, and of leaving her doubly oppressed, both by sorrow and poverty, got the better of all his resolution; and uttering, in broken accents, a few tender sentences, he expired in her arms. She became instantly as lifeless as himself, and was not for a long time recovered out of the fit she was in, no one being in a condition to take any reasonable methods to bring her to herself. Happy had it been for her, if her life had ended then! She revived only to feel the most extreme sorrow. She was speechless for near a fortnight, and seemed insensible to every thing. She visibly decayed, and was soon reduced to keep her bed from weakness. Our physician acquitted himself with the utmost care, but with no other effect than to give her strength enough to speak for a few moments. In these intervals, she expressed a desire to live; though her misery could never be alleviated. She said, she would bear it for our sakes. She often wept over us; and her weakness returning, and increasing hourly, put an end to her wretched life, and deprived

prived us of the last remaining, of the best, the kindest, and tenderest of parents.

These cruel misfortunes were immediately aggravated by the barbarity of those, who, during this time of sickness, were become our creditors; our small pittance not having been sufficient to defray all the extraordinary expences we were at. Being too well informed of our circumstances, and expecting no other payment than what they could provide for themselves, they sent bailiffs to seize our goods. Little used to such scenes, my terror was inexpressible, and was much increased by the distress my poor little brothers and sisters were in. Some ran for shelter into the next room, to my poor mother's body, others hung on me, equally incapable of assisting them. I thought, before this incident, I could not have been more miserable; but now I found myself absolutely distracted. In this condition I was, when that gentleman" (pointing to Bernardo) "came in, and gave me his charitable assistance; for which I am for ever bound in gratitude to him, and shall feel it to my latest breath."

Here tears stopped her words. Bernardo assured her, he heartily pitied the condition to which she and the rest of the family were reduced; and that he would take care to make them easy. He told her, she might depend on his constant assistance; and to remove any scruples she might be apt to have, he would never visit her, after she was once conveniently placed. He added, that he aimed at no more than the pleasure of relieving a person who seemed so highly to deserve it. He hinted gently to her, that he would take care of her mother's funeral; and as she would be forced to abandon all that was in the house to the creditors,

tors, he desired her to consider of some place where she might lodge with safety and reputation, and he would see her placed there directly, till she could provide herself with a house.

The sincerity which appeared to accompany his words, and the distress she was in, inclined her to accept his offers. But she told him, she hoped to put him to no farther expence than what arose immediately from the present charge he took upon himself.

The night had passed in these conversations, and it was now day-break, when Bernardo offered to attend her to the place she had fixed upon; but she refused to leave the house, whilst her mother's body remained in it. Upon this, we went and ordered every thing for the funeral, which was performed that afternoon. We afterwards repaired to the distressed family, and carried them, more dead than alive, to a very reputable house, which Sylvia (the eldest sister) had chosen. We had before ordered every thing for their reception; so that they were immediately accommodated. Bernardo gave her some money, and assured her of a constant supply, of what would be sufficient to provide for them, in the frugal manner they had been used to. He told her, that as her youth and beauty might render her more liable to be reflected upon, he would scarce ever come near her himself, but gave her a direction where to send to him, in case she should stand in need of his assistance. He then insisted upon the same promise from me, of not visiting her; which, I own, was not so readily given. But this gives him no right to triumph in a superiority of virtue; since love, not philosophy, was his guard. Had my affections been as entirely engaged as his, I could have been as cheaply virtuous,

virtuous, and as easily have determined not to see a pretty woman, when I was insensible to any pleasure arising from the sight of her beauty. However, though unwillingly, I did promise not to visit her.

Sylvia's heart overflowed with the most grateful acknowledgments to Bernardo; partly for the charitable assistance he had given her, but more still for the regard he had shewn for her, in resolving to prevent the malicious suggestions, to which his great generosity might give rise. She told him, she hoped to be able to live without further presuming on his goodness. We sat some time with her, in hopes of alleviating her excessive grief and melancholy. We returned to her a few days afterwards, and found her a little roused by the necessary cares which employed her. She had formed a very prudent scheme of life, and had contrived in the best manner imaginable, to make all her brothers and sisters, young as they were, of some small use. Her understanding and heart appeared so amiable, and raised the lustre of her beauty so much, that I could have wished to prolong our visit to a later hour than I believe would have been proper: but my wife guide carried me away, after we had taken a sort of farewell of her, which drew tears from eyes so long used to shed them. She thanked us fervently for our kind regard for her welfare, and character. She said, she must always retain the most grateful sense of our delicacy, altho' she thereby lost the high satisfaction of seeing her benefactors, and was deprived of the only means in her power, of shewing her gratitude.

We have often since taken care to hear of her, but have seldom seen her. She leads the most retired,

tired, industrious life that can be, and amazingly contrives to provide for her large family, with very little foreign assistance ; for she has returned most of the money that Bernardo from time to time sent her. The attention this affair required was of service to Bernardo, as it a little removed his thoughts from a melancholy subject that preyed both on his spirits and health. I would not lose the favourable opportunity this incident gave me, but, by my earnest entreaties, prevailed on him to appear a little in the world, and not live a recluse in the gayest city in Europe. His disgust would often get the better of his complaisance to me, but yet habit at length made company appear less terrible to him.

One of the houses we most frequented, tempted by the agreeableness of the lady to whom it belonged, and the concourse of polite company which met there, was that of Madame La Comtesse De ——. She is in the autumn of her age, and has all the charms that time of life is capable of. She is not more agreeable in her address, her politeness, and the genteel turn of her understanding, to her friends and visitors, than in her temper to her own family. A daughter, her only child, enjoys in her the ease and most agreeable qualities of a friend, with the tenderness and prudence of a mother. This young lady was about eighteen. Her person was fine, and her countenance the most pleasing that could be. Her face, tho' not regularly beautiful, yet was charming by the sweetness and good sense that shone in her eyes. I never saw a woman at her age so free from the spirit of coquetry. Her taste was very delicate, which, without any mixture of pride, made her reserved to the generality of men, but
entirely

entirely easy and affable with such as could lay the least claim to her approbation. Tho' she avoided those she disliked, it was with a sweetness that disarmed all their resentment. She chiefly conversed with those of a more advanced age ; preferring people who could at once entertain and improve her understanding, to those who would do little else than flatter her. She had a great deal of vivacity, but it was accompanied by so great a share of true wit, and sound judgment, that she never relished any conversation that was not rational.

As Bernardo's turn of mind so much resembled hers, they naturally chose to converse with the same people. The little resemblance there was between him and most of the young men of the age, made her cultivate his acquaintance with pleasure. It was not long before I perceived that she was possessed with a softer passion than friendship. Her vivacity decayed ; she avoided all conversation, when he was not there, excepting that she would sometimes favour me with hers. The distinction would have flattered me, had I not known the only merit she saw in me was being his friend. I could perceive the increase of her love, and all the various turns of her mind ; for her thoughts were easily read in her countenance. Forgive me, madam," turning to Cornelia, if " I say I wished her success. Such a woman must have made any man happy ; but one so capable of seeing and esteeming her worth, would have been blessed indeed. She had a fortune that would have enriched him. Her birth would honour any husband she could take. Then to be delivered from the unhappy passion that possessed him, was of itself a felicity. I joined my endeavours

vours to her charms. I omitted no opportunity of declaring my opinion of her. I found he esteemed her very highly, but that his heart was not in the least changed. He had no suspicions of being beloved, nor would I open his eyes, but thought it best to leave esteem and time to do their parts.

Mademoiselle De———had too entire confidence in her mother, to conceal any thing from her. She confessed to her the love she bore Bernardo. The countess had much less vanity than affection for her daughter. The character he bore, the merit that shone in him, and the tenderness her daughter expressed for him, soon prevailed over the objection that might have been made to the inequality of his fortune. She considered, that her daughter had what was sufficient for both. The countess had no desire to make her richer, at the expence of her happiness. She gave her the kindest assurances of her consent and approbation. She resolved to do more, and try how Bernardo was disposed towards her daughter.

Not long after this, as I happened one day to be at her house, when no other company was there, she took the opportunity, and, by talking of the intimacy that subsisted between her daughter and my friend, tried to find out whether he liked her. I answered, as the perfect esteem he had for the young lady obliged me to do. What I said, encouraged the countess to explain herself farther, and to ask me, if I thought her daughter and her fortune had charms sufficient to prevail on my friend to marry her. For that if he loved her as much as she deserved, his merit would, in her eyes, supply the place of wealth. I durst not an-

L

swer

fyer her as I wished, fearing Bernardo's prepossession was too strong to permit him to comply with the proposal; and I was therefore reduced to confess my ignorance in that point. She commissioned me to mention it to him. This I did when he returned home in the evening, after a conversation of some hours with Mademoiselle De——, who, from the pleasure she had received from the tenderness of the countess, had appeared more charming than ever that night.

I accompanied the proposal with all the persuasions I could utter. I placed it in every light that was favourable; but with so little success, that I could obtain no other answer, than that the faithlessness of his Cornelia could not cure his love, which remained as strong as ever; and therefore, he could not accept of the honour those ladies did him. He was indeed greatly affected with the thought of his being the cause of a moment's pain to a woman for whom he had so much esteem and friendship; and whom he thought, in every respect, superior to all her sex, but his beloved Cornelia. He desired me to make the state of his mind known to the countess, and to agree upon any measures with her, which we should think most proper in those circumstances.

In consequence of this commission, I declared the situation of his heart to the countess, and desired her to make what use of it she pleased. And we agreed, that she should inform her daughter of so much as might serve to prevent her from encouraging a passion, which she might otherwise reasonably hope to see returned; and that from the manner in which she would appear to be affected by this declaration, we should form a scheme for Bernardo's future conduct.

A few days after this conversation, the countess sent to me, and told me, that, with an aching heart, she had ventured to inform her daughter of Bernardo's having been long engaged to a young woman whom he idolized; and therefore she begged her daughter to consider whether his absence might not facilitate her conquest of a hopeless passion. The countess had softened this information with all the tenderness her heart could dictate, and seemed not in a much better condition than her daughter; who, overcome with the painful news, was incapable of making any other answer than with her tears. She grew very ill, and could not leave her room for some days. The countess made her indisposition a pretence for refusing to admit company; and spent that time in trying to amuse her. The tenderness of a mother she loved as much as she respected, did not prove ineffectual to Mademoiselle De——. She was so moved by seeing a parent condescend to feel, and try to alleviate, her concern, that she determined to get the better of a melancholy in which her mother so kindly took a share. The reason of this young lady was too strong to be exerted in vain. She promised to divert her thoughts by company: and said, she believed she could be very happy, if she was assured Bernardo would always love her as his friend; and she hoped, she should so far overcome her passion, as to suffer no more pain from it. The countess and I seeing her in such dispositions, agreed it would be best to keep her daughter entirely ignorant of all that had passed; and that Bernardo should come to the house, and behave as usual; only that he should now and then give her room to see that his heart was pre-engaged.

It was some time before Mademoiselle De—— recovered her looks. Bernardo visited her as usual, and she gave him all the marks of an unfeigned friendship, which he very cordially returned. By degrees he made her the confidante of his passion for Cornelia. The emotions, with which she at first heard him, affected us all extremely. But in time, she brought herself to converse with him upon that tender topic, with ease; and she seems, in all appearance, to have gain'd a greater conquest over herself than almost any one ever did before. The countess confirms me in the belief I have of this victory of reason, and joins with me in admiring it.

I declared when I began, how little liable I was to be tired of talking, of which, I doubt not, I have fully convinced you. But yet I cannot forbear mentioning a widow marchioness who resembled Mademoiselle De—— in her love for Bernardo, tho' not in many other respects. She is very rich, young, and handsome: advantages she values highly; and which she turns, as much as possible, to her entertainment. She is a finished coquet. Nature has given her some wit, and she has a vivacity that often passes for it. I never knew a woman who captivated more men. She was formed to inspire passion more than esteem. She singled out Bernardo, as the only person worthy of a return to that love she wished every one should have for her. She exerted all her arts unsuccessfully. He gave her so little attention, that he scarce perceived them; and her design never once entered his thoughts. I have often been ill-natured enough, to laugh at the disappointment I have seen her under, when after playing off her attractive arts, she found him
so

so wrapt up in his own thoughts, that all she said and did, passed unobserved. She would sometimes fret till her features were robbed of the beautiful composure, in which she had ranged them. At others, would fly into so great a passion, that after some bitter reproaches, which he received with as much insensibility as he did her kindness, to prevent too great an eclat, she has been obliged to retire till she had recovered herself, and had banished anger from her eyes. She would then return all smiles and love.

A woman of this disposition, you may guess, would not pine in secret love. Finding him slow in comprehending the most obvious signs, she ventured to try the power of words. And after informing him, that she was not ignorant of her own charms and merits, and how universally they had been sighed for, she acquainted him, in pretty plain terms, with her passion, invited him to make them legally his own, and share a splendid fortune with her. This she expressed in the manner of one who expects to have her offers accepted with rapture. But what a fall had her intranced imagination, when instead of the extasies she expected in return, Bernardo coldly thanked her, but owned his heart pre-engaged! Love was, by a most speedy transition, turned to rage. She told him, she should never forgive herself the meanness of having loved one so unworthy. She spared no reproaches for his bad taste; and, in the most opprobrious terms, loaded the unknown fair with all the abuse her imagination could suggest. Bernardo, rejoiced that her disappointment took a turn which would soon vent itself, without proving very detrimental to her, bore it with great philosophy. But see-

ing no likelihood of her rage subsiding, he thought it best to withdraw, and leave this furious lady to herself. He has since often met his marchioness; but she has never deigned to speak to him.

Altho' I believe he has received no more such explicit overtures, yet he has had invitations to love, from many bright eyes. I have observed several young women, who with virgin modesty have stolen, as they thought, unseen looks at him; and paid a tribute of sighs to a person which captivated them. Others have watched their husband's absence, or inattention, to let him read love in their eyes. And some widows have been more open in their civilities to him.

But all these furnished him with little entertainment. The only satisfaction he seemed capable of receiving, was from reading; from conversing with the learned, among whom he was greatly caressed, being united in friendship with some of the greatest geniuses of the age; and in doing good offices to all who stood in need of them. He has often made a worthy use of the arts of persuasion, which nature has so lavishly bestowed upon him; having reconciled many, whose quarrels had been judged irreconcilable, and prevailed on many to be just who, seemed quite otherwise disposed. It is painful to me, to suppress the many things of this kind he has done; or not to mention his refusal of a place of considerable distinction at court, because it had before been promised to another man, who, by that promise, had been prevented from engaging in a way of life, that might have brought the necessary addition to his paternal fortune. At some other time, when your ears are less
tired

tired than they must be at present, I may perhaps give you a particular account of these things.

I shall now draw towards a conclusion, by telling you, that neither the ladies, nor the learned, could give him that ease of mind, of which the absence, and still more cruel silence, of his Cornelia had robbed him. He felt constantly the wound her supposed inconstancy had made. Instead of recovering the hurt it had done his constitution, he decayed visibly. I had strongly before my eyes, the danger of losing him in a very short time. I prevailed on him to take advice. But the physicians declared, that nothing but ease of mind could preserve his life ; and that their art was useless in his case.

A few days ago he received a letter from his mother, the purport of which was, to let him know, that if he was more disposed to conform himself to her will, and shew he had as great a regard to his true interest as she had for him, he should be received at home with pleasure, both by herself and by Henrietta, who was weak enough still to retain a love for him, tho' he had shewn himself so little worthy of it. He wrote an answer, to excuse his accepting her invitation, and to apologize for his continuance in his former sentiments.

Wearied out with his fruitless inquiries after Cornelia, he told me, he had determined to travel over the whole kingdom, and make a strict inquiry in every place for her, till chance should bring him where she was. The design was strange. But, as I hoped change of place, air, and exercise, might be of service to him, I did not oppose it. Nor, in his state of health, could I bear to be absent from him, so desired I

might accompany him. He, with pleasure, consented, and we were to have begun our progress two days hence, if our search had not been so happily stopped."

Devaux ended his narration; the latter part of which drew some tears from Cornelia, who felt much pain from thinking of what Bernardo had suffered on her account. But the great proofs he had given of his constancy, which had at first filled her with joy, made the more lasting impression. Her mind was now incapable of retaining melancholy for any long time, when she had so much reason to believe all the causes of it at an end.

Many days had not passed, before Bernardo and Cornelia agreed to marry, without any farther delays. Her fortune was sufficient for them both, if they lived at the place she had before inhabited. Mr. and Madame De Rhone were happy in the expectation of seeing them at last fixed in their neighbourhood. Lucinda had her share in the general satisfaction. They wrote her an account of all that had passed; and told her, they intended soon to be with her: and that Bernardo would insist on Madame De La Roche's permitting her to live with them. No people could be more happy than the two lovers, in being thus rewarded for what they had suffered, and in hopes of being now at the end of all their distresses.

The night before that fixed upon for the celebration of their nuptials, they consented to accompany Mr. and Madame De Rhone to a new play. They had not long been seated before Mr. De Rhée entered the next box, with a lady, whom Bernardo acquainted them was his Wife. Mr.

De

De Rhée had gone to the Spâ at Bourbon for an indisposition. The place appeared very dull to him, without his usual amusement of gallantry to enliven it, therefore he pitched on a very pretty young woman, who was there with her mother, to be the object of his addresses. The gaiety of her temper, and freedom of her carriage, made her more attracting to him, who meant no more than a little present amusement. He was very well received by the lady, and not being able to choose a more gracious princess, he continued very assiduous in his courtship.

When the time of his departure drew near, the nymph, finding by his discourse, that he intended to leave her with the place, consulted with her mother about the means of making him do a lasting penance for his rash courtship. For this purpose they sent for near half a score of male relations, who went to Mr. De Rhée with all the impudence of true bullies, and required satisfaction for the affront he had put on their relation, by making love so long without intending marriage. Mr. De Rhée found that they were all disposed to fight him, and did not choose to venture his life so often over: nor yet was he inclined to exchange a liberty, which, to him, had so many charms, for the slavery of a husband; especially to one, who would, probably, abridge no man's freedom but that of her spouse. He was some time in settling the question, whether he should prefer fighting ten duels to marrying one wife. The first indeed would be the shortest evil; but then he considered, that it might most probably become so by the shortness of his life. At last he declared in favour of matrimony, which he thought could scarce be more disagreeable than

the grave, and chose to live a husband rather than run the risk of not living at all. And to quicken his resolutions, these fierce relations of the lady would not lose sight of him till the indissoluble knot was tied,

When the ceremony was over, they left him to reconcile himself, in the best manner he could, to the match. His wife, knowing he had been induced to it, only by having death placed before his eyes, thought herself little obliged to him for the preference, and in her turn slighted him, for those who had a proper sense of her charms, without their being set off by such a foil as that grim spectre. What made the jest run stronger on Mr. De Rhée was, that every one else was persuaded, that if his sword had been drawn, those of this bullying family would have returned peaceably into their scabbards. But the terror they infused into him was so great, that he seems not yet recovered from it; he is as much afraid of his wife, as if she, like the rest of her family, wore a sword, and he winks at her gallantries with all the complaisance of the most obsequious husband.

With this lady it was, that Mr De Rhée came to the play. But had he been more inclined to converse with her, his attention would soon have been withdrawn from her by the sight of Cornelia, who was improved in beauty since he saw her, and particularly so, since the happiness she had now, tho' but for a small time, enjoyed. Mr. De Rhée's presence did not contribute to her ease. She could not see him without recollecting the terrors into which she had been put by him. His assurance soon got the better of his surprize, and he accosted her; but her resentment was too strong

strong to permit her to make him a reply. He was nettled at the anger and scorn with which she treated him, but more piqued still by her behaviour to Bernardo, with whom she appeared to converse with great pleasure and familiarity.

As Cornelia was going out of the play-house, Mr. De Rhée met her, and attempted to take her hand, which Bernardo would not suffer. This began a scuffle. Swords were soon drawn, and Mr. De Rhée was severely wounded, and disarmed, before any body could come to part them. Bernardo received a slight hurt; but this was the least evil brought upon him by this combat. He was immediately surrounded by a great crowd, and soon after taken into custody by the officers of justice, and then removed to the bastile by an order from the king, to whom the affair had been misrepresented.

Cornelia's grief and fear were inexpressible. Mr. De Rhone exerted himself with that true spirit and zeal of friendship so peculiar to himself, and succeeded so well, that he obtained leave to see Bernardo, and to carry any friend with him, and had also great hopes given him of his speedy release. Mr. De Rhone went directly to inform his imprisoned friend of the success of his endeavours; and promised to let him enjoy the most agreeable fruits of his solicitations by bringing Cornelia to him. Mr. De Rhone then hastened to her, and returned with her to Bernardo, as soon as the first flutter of her joy was sufficiently abated, to suffer her to accompany him. The sight of her gave Bernardo inexpressible joy; but hers was much allayed by the dismal appearance of the place where he was confined. A thousand anxious fears arose in her mind,

which were, however, soon dispelled, by seeing him, and by the confidence she had in Mr. De Rhone's friendship and interest.

They enjoyed these interviews for a few days, in continual expectation, that every moment would be the last of his confinement. Mr. De Rhone being one day obliged to go a few miles out of Paris, about particular business, sent a letter to acquaint Bernardo that he would be discharged that evening, as soon as the proper officer for that purpose returned to town. The prison now no longer appeared melancholy to them, and many hours passed very agreeably in expectation of the happy moment. At last the officer appeared; they received him with great joy, and Bernardo began to make him his compliments of farewell. But he was told, he might defer them till a more proper opportunity, for that the king, instead of having given any orders to release him, had commanded him into stricter confinement than ever. This was like a sentence of death to the two lovers, who could not support themselves under it. Bernardo had scarce strength enough to catch his fainting Cornelia in his arms. Tho' the officer was, by long use, grown pretty callous to human distress, yet her beauty softened his heart a little, and made him, with some signs of pity, inform her, when she recovered, that she was included in this new sentence, and was also to be confined. He was surprized to see that she seemed to receive some satisfaction on this occasion. But he soon put an end to all comfort, by his requiring her to go with him to the room appointed for her. Bernardo asked, if they might not sometimes meet. But all the answer he received was, that they were neither
of.

of them permitted to see any one, but the necessary people to attend them; and least of all each other. They asked, what new offence had occasioned this alteration? They were told, it was a rule in the bastile, to leave such informations to the consciences of the criminals; and that it was the part of a good officer to see the execution of, and not give reasons for, the sentence. He concluded, by desiring Cornelia to detain him no longer.

Bernardo could not bear the thought of parting with her. He caught her in his arms, and vowed nothing should take her from him; uttering a thousand extravagant things dictated by the excess of his passion. But, at length, when his senses were a little more composed, the officer made him sensible of the necessity of obedience. The lovers took a farewell of each other, as if it had been their last. Cornelia was led into a very melancholy chamber: but the state of her mind was so wretched, that she could be but little moved by any external object.

Mr. De Rhone had no sooner left Paris, than Mad. De La Roche appeared at the palace, and most earnestly begged an audience of the king. She had been informed by the spies she had set on Bernardo of all that had passed, and she came to Paris with the resolution to stop his marriage with Cornelia. When she appeared before the king, she threw herself at his feet, and begged his assistance to save her son from ruin. She proceeded to tell his majesty, that this son had been long infatuated with the beauty of a woman, who had been a servant in her house; that his passion had led him to the highest breaches of duty and honour, and had caused him to commit
many

many enormities ; that he was come to such a height of madness, as to be determined to marry this woman as soon as he was released, however detrimental such a match might be to his fortune and reputation ; and that neither the lowness of her birth, nor the vileness of her character, could deter him. She then launched out into all the invectives that her malice could invent, and concluded, by begging his majesty to confine him, and the woman likewise, till he should be sufficiently restored to his reason, to give up all thoughts of so scandalous an union. The king granted her request, and, in consequence, gave the orders above related.

Mr. and Madame De Rhone, on their return to Paris, heard, with the utmost astonishment, that both their friends were closely confined, and not permitted to speak to each other, or to any one else. Mr. De Rhone went directly to court, where he was informed of the cause of this melancholy change. Both he and his Julia were most sensibly affected ; and determined to use their utmost endeavours to oppose Madame De La Roche. They employed the credit of all their friends to disabuse the king, and at last obtained leave to bring Cornelia before him, to make her defence. Mr. De Rhone judged that her beauty would prove the most powerful advocate ; and that Octavio's absence from court, at that time, would enable her to perform her task with less confusion.

Cornelia was conducted to her audience by Madame Du Maine, who was come to Paris, to try what she could do for her service. She was also accompanied by Mr. and Madame De Rhone, and all the persons of distinction of their acquaintance,

quaintance, with whom they had any influence. Cornelia was dressed in the most becoming manner imaginable, with a simplicity and negligence suitable to the humble part she was to act, and to her present unfortunate situation. Curiosity had filled all the rooms thro' which she was to pass to the king's presence. The dignity of her air struck all with admiration as soon as she appeared. But when she drew nearer, her excessive beauty, the delicacy of her whole person, and the perfection of her form, charmed every beholder. Murmurs of surprize and applause went thro' the rooms, which served a little to revive her. She appeared before the king with courage, and yet with the most engaging modesty. His majesty, prejudiced by her appearance as much as his subjects, received her very graciously. She gave him an account, tho' not without putting great force upon herself, of all that could tend to her justification. She referred him to Madame Du Maine, and Madame De Rhone for her character and behaviour, if he would condescend to enquire of them. She said, they had known her longer, and much more intimately, than Madame De La Roche, who was apparently a prejudiced person. She concluded, by begging her own liberty and Bernardo's in the most earnest manner. This request she made on her knees, and in so graceful a manner, and with such an air of truth and innocence, that the king could no longer resist. He assured her, that she should be no longer treated as a close prisoner, but should have an apartment in his palace, tho' out of regard to Madame De La Roche, he could not dispense with placing a guard over her till matters were accommodated.

She thanked his majesty with a very ill grace, not having obtained what she most wished for.
She

She ventured to tell the monarch, that her own liberty was what concerned her least: that the reflection that Bernardo was confined on her account, would be more grievous to her than the closest prison: that she humbly presumed, his liberty would be more agreeable to Madame De La Roche than hers, and would equally prevent the marriage that lady so much dreaded: that if his majesty would be pleased to change his sentence, and grant to Bernardo, what he had so graciously offered her, she then should feel an inexpressible satisfaction; and she most earnestly entreated his consent to this alternative.

The king could not help smiling at her importunity; but told her, that if she was too generous to be concerned about herself, it was necessary that some other should: that he would be the person, and must therefore refuse her request at present, tho' she might be assured, that Bernardo should soon obtain his liberty, if Madame De La Roche was properly complied with. He added, that Mr. De Rhone should have leave to visit him, and inform him of what had passed.

Cornelia was forced to be contented with her success, tho' it fell far short of her wishes. Her friends were well pleased, and she received the congratulations of many, even strangers, as she returned through the royal apartments. Her answers charmed as much as her person had done. But she was glad to get free from these civilities as soon as possible, not feeling that joy which every one seemed to feel for her.

As soon as she was left with her friends, she begged Mr. De Rhone to make immediate use of the liberty allowed him. His impatience was little less than hers, and he hastened to the bastille with

all

all imaginable speed. Bernardo, overjoyed to see his friend, begged to know if he could give him any intelligence of his Cornelia. Mr. De Rhone then related to him all that had happened. This news gave Bernardo inexpressible joy, and he signified his gratitude to Mr. De Rhone in the most lively manner.

He then informed Mr. De Rhone, that two days before, he had had a letter from Madame De La Roche, assuring him, that if he would give her his word and honour, never to marry Cornelia, he should be released directly, and receive all the marks of her affection he could desire: but that if he did not comply, his fate was in her hands, and he should remain a prisoner to the end of his life. That he had hereupon shortly replied, that he never would abandon his Cornelia, but with his latest breath. He begged Mr. De Rhone to caution her against complying with any proposal that might be made to her for the same purpose, as it seemed not improbable, that their enemies would apply to her, in hopes of obtaining from her generous concern for him, what all the menaces in the world could not obtain from himself. He concluded with saying, that he preferred his present situation, with the hopes she would one day be his, to all that liberty and the world could give him without such hopes.

Mr. De Rhone said all he could to encourage his expectations of being soon restored to his Cornelia; and then left him, to carry that ease to her, which nothing but the knowledge of his health could give her. Her own situation was extremely agreeable in every respect, but that of being separated from Bernardo. Persons of the first quality of both sexes began to court her acquaintance,

ance, and she received a great many visits from them. Curiosity brought some, inclination and compassion others, till it became a fashion; and then it may easily be believed, her apartment was crowded. This way of life was more publick than she would have chosen; but as she might have occasion for many friends, she submitted. She found more satisfaction than she expected, from the concern many seemed to have for her interest, and the endeavours they used to promote it.

The king intimated an inclination to have her attend the court, which she accordingly did, and had frequent conversations with his majesty. Every one saw, that he was not so full of his dignity, but that he could condescend to envy an imprisoned subject. However, her continual solicitations for Bernardo's liberty, whenever she had an opportunity, discouraged the monarch from making any declarations; tho' he tried, by all other means, to find out whether ambition might not divide her heart. But every thing shewed him the truth of her affection so plainly, that his esteem for her increased very much, although he could not help being mortified at the same time.

After two months had passed since her leaving the bastile, Madame De La Roche had returned into the country, thoroughly chagrined at the favour Cornelia was in with his majesty, and the great interest she had acquired among so many persons of the first rank, who espoused her cause and character so warmly, that her enemies began to despair of success.

The king, one evening, after a long and gallant conversation with Cornelia, wherein she had mixed, according to custom, many petitions for

Ber-

Bernardo's release, told her, that tho' she could, without pity, let a king sigh in vain, it would be shameful if a king should let her do so, as she had a better title to command than hereditary right could give, and might more properly be said to be possessed of a divine right than any monarch on his throne. He added, that he would shew her he could obey, and therefore declared Bernardo free from that moment. Her acknowledgments of his goodness were made with such a warmth of joy and gratitude, that those, who had not heard the conversation, easily guessed the cause of them. She got an order directly, and, transported with her success, would permit no one but herself to inform Bernardo of it; but went directly to the bastille. The order procured her immediate admittance to his chamber. The pleasure they received from this interview, can be imagined only by lovers as tender, and as unfortunate, as these two had hitherto been.

As soon as the transports of their first meeting were over, they went to communicate their happiness to Mr. and Madame De Rhone. The next day was fixed upon for Bernardo to return thanks to the king. Bernardo was graciously received, and congratulated by every one on his liberty; but most of all, on the possession of the affections of her who had procured it him. The king, amongst the rest, made him some polite compliments on that occasion; and then, turning to Cornelia, told her, she was no longer under any other guard than her own; but hoped she would continue in her apartment for that day, because he intended to take leave of her in it. She said all that was proper, to thank his majesty for the honour he designed her.

The

The king kept his word, and came in the evening, with many of his court. The sight of Octavio discomposed her extremely; and his confusion was much greater. He was returned that day from Aix La Chapelle, and it was a desire to shew him a woman, whom the king thought more beautiful than any he had ever seen, that induced his majesty to propose this visit. The consternation, that appeared in Octavio's countenance, diverted the king, who looked upon it as the effect of Cornelia's charms. He whispered to his favourite, "I find your heart will never be proof against the power of beauty." Octavio's answer was so confused, that it did not destroy his master's supposition; nor indeed did he think of doing it. The king perceived some change in Cornelia; but he ascribed it to the effect of surprize and bashfulness, on seeing the sudden impression she had made on Octavio. She was obliged to exert all her command over herself, to perform even the necessary civilities to her company.

Her uncle found his task more difficult. He was shocked with seeing one whom he had so much injured; but was much more troubled by the revival of a passion which time had not extinguished. He could not look on Bernardo, without feeling all the pangs of jealousy. At length, unable to contain himself any longer, he went up to Cornelia, as soon as he observed that all around her were engaged in play or conversation; and, with fury in his eyes, asked her, if she designed to marry without asking his consent. She told him, that he had forfeited all title to duty from her; and that she thought she made him a sufficient return for any obligations he had once conferred upon her, by not declaring how much
he

he had done to cancel them; and choosing a thousand hardships, and to pass for a woman of low birth, rather than tell the world it was he who had reduced her to live as such: that her obligation was now to the man, who had suffered so much, from a desire of raising her above the mean state in which she had appeared, and who was willing to take her, though robbed of all the goods of fortune, and the honours of her birth: that a compliance with the dictates of love and gratitude, were now become her chief duty; but that if he chose to be on friendly terms with her, she would try to forget what she had always so carefully concealed, and henceforward look on him as an uncle.

He answered her in a rage, that she had better wait for his consent to marry, or he would bring such a cloud over her present sunshine, that it should surpass her power to dispel the storm; and that he left her to judge how little able she was of contending with him, notwithstanding all her seeming favour. Having said this in the most menacing manner, he left her in no small terror; which was much encreased towards the end of the evening; when the king, after having attentively listened for a considerable time to Octavio, took a very slight leave of her, with a visible alteration in his countenance.

Cornelia detained Madam Du Maine, Mr. and Madame De Rhone, Bernardo, and Mr. Devaux, after the rest of the company, and told them what had passed between Octavio and her. They had been concerned all the evening, to think how she would support the scene; but they were made more so now. Bernardo begged, they might be married directly, that their union might
no

no longer depend upon chance. None of her friends could see any certain prospect of safety for her, if Octavio should be as wicked as he expressed himself to be, and as his actions had too often declared. She proposed flying the kingdom. Bernardo joyfully agreed; assuring her, he should look upon that to be his country, where she could live with most safety and ease. All their friends were satisfied, that it would be best for them to take this course, for some time at least, and that they could not put their design into execution too speedily. Cornelia declared she would set out that night, and Bernardo ran to prepare every thing necessary. Mr. and Madame De Rhone carried Cornelia to their house, where she staid till Bernardo came, and told her the conveyance was ready. These affectionate friends took care to supply the travellers with money, and whatever necessities their chaise could hold; and then took their leaves in the most tender manner.

Bernardo and Cornelia travelled with all possible speed, happy in the hopes of a certain refuge. They never stopped, day nor night, till they arrived at a town within the dominions of Spain. As they had nothing so much at heart as their union, they married, as soon as they could with safety obtain the sanction of the church. After so many disappointments, it is no wonder they should be too happy in being at last united, to think of changing their abode immediately, however inconvenient it might otherwise be. From this place they wrote to their friends, to acquaint them with their safety and happiness; and here they received their sincere congratulations.

Cor-

Cornelia had left Maria with a charge to endeavour to get Lucinda out of the convent by stealth, and bring her to this town, where they resolved to stay some time, and where, if Maria did not find them, she would find farther directions. For as it might, in all probability, be long before they could hope for the completion of this scheme, Bernardo and Cornelia thought it would be to no purpose to wait near the frontiers for Lucinda; and therefore travelled in quest of some more agreeable and convenient place to settle in.

After an unsatisfactory search for some time, they at last found what seemed to answer their purpose extremely well. The house was very plain and small; its chief beauty was its situation, which being on a rising ground, commanded a very delightful and extensive prospect on one side, and on the other was shaded by a fine wood. At the bottom of a hill ran a very beautiful river, which continued its serpentine course so advantageously, that it terminated all the lower part of the gardens. In the upper part, were formed several terrasses, and sloping walks, planted on each side with the finest trees, which afforded at once a most agreeable shelter from the sun or wind. Nature had scarce left any room for art, in ornamenting this little spot, which suited the taste of this happy couple so well, that they agreed for the rent directly with the landlord's steward, who lived in the house and took care of the land belonging to it.

Here they enjoyed all the happiness they had ever proposed to themselves; with this addition, by the news they received a few months after they had settled in this place, that Maria had executed

ecuted her commission so well, that she had brought Lucinda off safe ; and would reach Spain almost as soon as her letter. Bernardo and Cornelia agreed to meet Lucinda, and conduct her to their habitation. When they had got within a little more than half a day's journey of the place where Lucinda was, they were informed that the remaining part of the road was extremely bad, and dangerous for carriages. This made Bernardo insist on Cornelia's proceeding no farther ; and that he alone should finish the intended journey on horseback, for which the road would serve very well.

He accordingly set out next morning. Towards evening, Cornelia walked out to take the air, and amuse herself with the prospect of the country round about the little town, where she was to wait Bernardo's return. She had insensibly walked to some distance, and was flattering herself with the hopes of seeing him and Lucinda, when she was met by some horsemen, who immediately alighted, surrounded her, and told her in civil terms she must go with them. She was extremely surprized with their address, and inquired where she was to go. One of them answered, to the place from whence she came ; where she would find that it was happier to live with a good parent, than to undergo the fate of a fugitive. She assured them they were mistaken, that she was not the fugitive they supposed ; that she was married, and expected her husband that evening, the sight of whom would soon convince them of their mistake. They told her, they knew her extremely well ; and that they knew she had a husband ; but that she ought to have known, that a parent's consent was no less necessary to
make

make him properly so, than the ceremonies of the church.

Without answering any more of her questions, they led her to an equipage that waited at a small distance, in which they put her. At first she had flattered herself, that they had mistaken her for another; but at last she began to fear, that they had been employed by her uncle, to bring her back to him. The thought filled her with horror; and she remained in the greatest anguish and perplexity of mind, both for herself and for Bernardo; who, she knew, must be miserable, when, upon his return, he found her missing.

Her only comfort was to find, that though she had been carried off unjustly and violently, yet she met with nothing but respectful behaviour during her journey. She was entirely unacquainted with the road she travelled. She did not even know whether she was in France, or Spain; but she feared the former. It was late in the night before she came to any inn, and when she alighted, she was surprized to find the innkeeper accost her in Spanish. She could not understand how she should still be on Spanish ground, and was more surprized than ever, when, upon enquiry, she found she was in the road to Madrid. This revived her hopes of having been mistaken for some other woman, and the fear of her uncle subsided.

Her guides, or rather guards, had charged the landlady not to give her pen and ink, or in any way accommodate her with materials for writing; but the woman being naturally good-natured, and touched with the grief in which Cornelia seemed to be, when she first entered the house,

M

and

and with the sweetness and affability of her behaviour, readily complied with her request, and brought her pen, ink and paper, in spite of all the injunctions to the contrary.

Cornelia wrote two letters to Bernardo, one directed to the place where he had left her; and the other to their own house. She informed him of the manner in which she had been deprived of the joy of receiving him, and of her suspicion of some mistake. She told him, that though she received, in other respects, very civil usage from her guards, yet she could not obtain an answer to any question she asked. All the intelligence she could give him, was the name of the place from whence she wrote, and from which she understood she was to depart by break of day for Madrid. She also wrote to Madame Du Maine, and Madame De Rhone, to the same purpose. She then engaged her landlady's promise to carry these letters secretly to the next post-house. She found no inclination to sleep; and indeed the vigilance of her conductors would scarce have allowed her time for it.

They set out by break of day, as they had proposed. But we must leave them in their road, to give some account of Bernardo's situation.

He arrived late at the inn with Lucinda. They both alighted full of the most pleasing expectations. But, to their inexpressible disappointment, surprize, and grief, they were told, that Cornelia had not been seen nor heard of, from the time she went out to take a walk an hour or two before sun-set. Upon farther examination, they were informed, that some men had been there in the morning, and had enquired, if a young gentleman

man and lady had stopped there ; and had been told, that two such persons, as they described, came to the inn the night before. They then asked several particular questions, as to the stature, complexion, and appearance of the lady ; all which had agreed so well with what the people of the inn had observed of Cornelia, that no doubt remained of her being the lady they sought. This account relieved Bernardo's fears for her life, but raised others in him for her liberty ; apprehending, as she herself had done, that this villainous scheme had been the work of Octavio.

Upon this supposition, he took post for France, hoping to overtake Cornelia, or at least to meet with Octavio at Paris, and revenge the injury, if he could not rescue her. As he reached Paris, he went to consult with Mr. De Rhone, as to the manner in which he should proceed. Mr. De Rhone was glad to ease him of part of his fears, by assuring him of the improbability of Octavio's having been employed in the execution of any such design, he having at present matters of a more immediate concern to engage all his care and attention ; it being certain, that he had lost the king's favour, after having so long engrossed it ; and that it was generally believed, that all his attempts to regain it would prove vain. This would have been no disagreeable news to Bernardo at any other time ; but his thoughts were then so entirely engaged about finding his Cornelia, that the prospect that opened to him of recovering her estate, and asserting her birth, did not give him a moment's joy. But the next day brought him some degree of happiness, with Cornelia's letter to Mr. De Rhone. Bernardo immediately

mediately took leave of his friend, and set out post for his own house in Spain, where he expected to find farther intelligence.

Cornelia being now every day more satisfied, that some mistake was the cause of the unlucky accident, which had at first so much alarmed her, travelled on with more ease of mind for herself; and flattered herself, that Bernardo would be made quiet by her letters. She was, after a journey of four days, brought to a magnificent house near Madrid, where she was received in a very solemn manner by all the domesticks. Convinced that she was brought thither by mistake, she could scarce forbear laughing under her veil, to think of the surprize her listing it up would cause. She found, however, that this was not to be done immediately; for she was put into an empty room, and left alone a considerable time.

At last a gentleman and lady entered with very stern countenances, and began to reproach her for her unworthy behaviour and disobedience. Cornelia having no great desire to hear what they could say on a subject of so little moment to her, chose to undeceive them as soon as possible, and, lifting up her veil, at once stopped their harangue, and rendered them incapable of expressing even their surprize, otherwise than by their looks. She told them, how she had been seized and brought there, and how impossible she found it to convince those who had conducted her of their mistake.

The gentleman, whose name was Cornaro, and his lady, were too much disappointed to make any answer immediately. But, as soon as they had a little recovered their surprize, they, with great politeness, endeavoured to excuse the behaviour of
of

of their people, and acknowledged their own fault in sending persons in search of their daughter, that had never seen her. Cornaro said, that in the midst of the confusion and grief, occasioned by the flight of his daughter, he had chosen men that knew the country well, and thought the description given them, had been so exact, that no mistake could happen. The old gentleman and his lady entertained Cornelia with the utmost civility, and begged they might in some measure recompence her for the trouble she had had, by shewing her Madrid and its diversions.

She was too much fatigued with her journey to return home immediately; and therefore willingly accepted of their invitation. She wrote to Bernardo, and, at the desire of Signior Cornaro and his lady, begged him and Lucinda to come to Madrid. Cornaro's daughter was so much of the size and shape of Cornelia, that, by borrowing her cloaths, she was very well equipped, according to the fashion of the country. As soon as Bernardo received her letter, he set out with Lucinda, and made Cornelia happy by his arrival in less time than she expected.

Cornaro and his lady prevailed on them to appear at Madrid. When Bernardo and Cornelia were introduced at court, they excited the admiration of all beholders; so beautiful a couple had never been seen there. Their persons, their behaviour, and the respect every one had for Cornaro, occasioned their receiving very great civilities from most people of distinction, who seemed desirous to shew them Madrid to the greatest advantage. But none appeared so much pleased as the queen. She caressed Cornelia extremely, and

begged, if she and Bernardo continued in Spain, that they would make Madrid the place of their residence.

But this public way of life was little suited to their tastes. They soon began, amidst the entertainments now provided for them, to long after their solitude, and the uninterrupted enjoyment of each others conversation. But they were detained from gratifying this inclination for some time longer. A letter from Mr. De Rhone informed them, that Octavio was in great disgrace with the king, and banish'd from court; and he pressed them to come and claim Cornelia's fortune, and assert her birth. They determined to follow his advice; but Cornelia would not leave Spain, till she had reconciled Cornaro and his lady to their daughter.

Bernardo, in his road to Madrid, had observed, at a place where he stopped, a young lady and gentleman, who seemed careful to conceal themselves. The young lady's resemblance to Cornelia, made it probable, that she might be the person for whom Cornelia had been taken. Bernardo thinking he might have an opportunity of doing her service with her father and mother, desired leave to speak to her, and told her the occasion of his journey; adding, that if she was the lady he supposed, she might command him in any thing wherein she thought he might be useful to her. She replied, that his offers were too generous, not to deserve sincerity from her; that she was the person he imagined, and should be eternally obliged to him, if he could obtain the forgiveness of her parents, for having married without their consent; and that in every point, wherein

wherein her happiness was not so nearly concerned, they should find her all obedience. Bernardo and Cornelia employed their utmost endeavours, to conquer the resentment of the rigid parents ; and at length succeeded so well, as to obtain a pardon for the new married couple, and leave to come and throw themselves at the old gentleman's and lady's feet. This was soon followed by a perfect reconciliation.

Bernardo had yet one care remaining, which was to find out Sylvia's relations, and to obtain from them the fortune to which their mother had a right. By the interposition of the queen, this was effected. Poor Sylvia got hereby a sum sufficient to afford her, and all the little family, a very easy independency, especially in the hands of one who understood oeconomy so well.

Bernardo and Cornelia then took their leaves of those, from whom they had received so many civilities, and set out for France to attend their own affairs. Mr. and Madame De Rhone met them, and they consulted together in what manner they should proceed. Mr. De Rhone undertook to obtain an audience of the king for Bernardo ; in which he should relate to his majesty, the treatment Cornelia had met with from Octavio, and ask permission for her to claim her right.

In the mean time, as Cornelia would not delay any pleasure in her power to bestow on a friend, she went to Sylvia ; whom she found in the same way of life, in which she had left her. Cornelia had cultivated an intimacy with her before she left Paris, and they had afterwards corresponded. Sylvia was extremely rejoiced to hear the success of her friend's endeavours, and expressed her grati-

gratitude in the most affecting manner. As a very small independency had been the utmost of her wishes, she was now completely happy.

Devaux had, from the first time he saw her, conceived a particular affection for her, and would have married her, if he had not feared his fortune would prove insufficient to maintain so large a family. But now that they were provided for, he began to make his addresses to her, and would gladly have prevailed on her to accept of his hand and fortune. But she could not be induced to consent. She declared, that if she ever married, she was resolved it should not be till her brothers and sisters had out-grown her care; for that at present their education was employment enough for her; and she had never yet seen the man she liked well enough, to engage her to change this resolution. Bernardo found the king very well inclined to hear him, and to admit the justice of his claim. Measures were immediately taken to dispossess Octavio of his niece's estate. Her birth was publicly declared, and all the civilities and caresses, she had before so publicly received, were now renewed.

Madame De La Roche had no excuse remaining for her anger. She therefore acquiesced, and congratulated her son and Cornelia with seeming good will; and what was of more moment to them, she consented to leave Lucinda to the care of her brother.

Octavio defended himself as long as the chicanery of the law would permit. But the proofs of his baseness were too strong to be resisted. Cornelia's claim was soon decided according to justice.

This

This being settled, Bernardo and she went to her house, accompanied by Madame Du Maine, Mr. and Madame De Rhone, Lucinda, Sylvia and her family.

Octavio had improved the place, which was before charming. The house was fine, and very elegantly furnished; the gardens and park were extremely beautiful and extensive, and diversified with lawns and woods to the greatest advantage. The park reached to the sea. Not far from the house, was a navigable river, which formed a fine and well frequented harbour for ships. A small river ran thro' the gardens and park, in the most beautiful meanders, and formed several delightful cascades. The buildings and grottos in the gardens were finely executed, and judiciously placed.

The joy of all the poor people of the neighbourhood, who remembered, and had long mourned the loss of their benefactress, was extreme, their interest and gratitude being equally concerned. For Octavio had shewn little regard to Cornelia's request, about the continuance of her charities. These were now doubled, the increase of Bernardo's fortune making it convenient. For Madame De La Roche died soon after she had been reconciled to her son: and by her death he inherited a very considerable fortune.

Bernardo and Cornelia equally felt the exquisite joy of making all those, to whom their power could extend, as happy as their tempers would permit. They were particularly attentive to the education of the great numbers of children they took under their care, and they had the satisfaction of seeing this care rewarded by success.

Their

Their neighbourhood, in a few years, was stocked with an honest industrious race, happy in themselves, and useful to their country.

The generosity of this amiable couple was not confined to those, who stood absolutely in need of subsistence ; but extended often to the conveniencies of others, who wanted some addition to their fortune, to make them perfectly easy.

Whilst they were thus endeavouring to promote the happiness of all around them, they themselves enjoyed a felicity, which nothing but the most exalted virtue can give. Their constant study to advance in every perfection of the heart or understanding, and the daily progress they observed in each other, was a continual source of delight to them. They remained not long without an increase of family. The education of their offspring was the great object of their attention ; they were watchful over their young minds almost from their birth, and were indefatigable in forming them to the love of truth and virtue. They were amply rewarded by the success of their endeavours ; and some of their children have distinguished themselves among the first in merit and genius in France.

Bernardo and Cornelia thus passed their lives in the enjoyment of every social happiness, and in the highest public respect and applause. They were honoured by all who ever heard of them, and beloved by every one who had a nearer knowledge of them. They lived many years together, without the least abatement of their affections, or their happiness. Their love and esteem for each other was rather strengthened by time, and the many endearing ties that subsisted between them.

They



They long enjoyed their dearest friends. Madame Du Maine came to live with them, and made an agreeable addition to their society, till by her great age they were obliged to resign her to the necessary fate of mortality. Mr. and Madame De Rhone lived in a constant course of bliss, and continued, to their latest breaths, the tender friends of Cornelia and Bernardo. Lucinda married a gentleman of great worth, with whom she lived happy enough to converse with her friends without envy. Sylvia lived many years in Cornelia's neighbourhood, happy in her friendship, and in her own merit, excellent dispositions and understanding.

Octavio tried all the ways an ingenious courtier could invent, to reinstate himself in his sovereign's favour. But meeting with constant disappointments, and finding himself avoided by every one, even by those who had paid most court to him during his prosperity, he found too late, that tho' power may bring flatterers and dependants, merit alone can create friends. These mortifications disgusted him so much of the world, that he retired among the Capuchins. But he soon found that neither his mind, nor conscience were fit for solitude. At length he fell into a lingering disease, which increasing daily, he sent for Cornelia, and begged her forgiveness. She did what she could to relieve him in his last moments, but all in vain. He died melancholy, in a few weeks, after having bequeathed her the small remains of his fortune.

F I N I S.

BOOKS. printed for and sold by JOHN
SMITH on the *Blind-quay*.

A Collection of the Parliamentary Debates in
England, from the Restoration to the present
time, in 24 Vols. 8vo.

Dr. Conyers Middleton's Life of Cicero, 2 vols.
8vo.

—Free Inquiry into the Mi-
raculous Powers which are supposed to have subsisted
in the Christian Church, &c. 8vo.

Abernethy's Sermons on the Attributes, 2 vols.
8vo.

—Sermons on several Subjects, 2 vols.
8vo.

Rollin's Belles Lettres, 4 vols. 12mo.

Gordon's Translation of Sallust, 8vo.

Bp. Burnet's History of the Reformation of the
Church of England, 3 vols. Fol.

Millar's Gardeners Dictionary, Fol.

Harrington's Oceana and other Works, to which
is added, Plato Redivivus, Fol.

Hutcheson's moral Philosophy, 12mo.

Weston on the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, 12mo.

Taylor on the Epistle to the Romans, 8vo.

Theobald's Shakespear, 7 vols. 12mo.

Warburton's Shakespear, 8 vols. 12mo.

Hanmer's Shakespear, 9 vols. 12mo.

History of Tom Jones, 3 vols. 12mo.

Bolinbroke's Letters on Patriotism, 12mo.



2 1 1 1 1

